

Brighton bomb police cleared of lapse

By Colin Brown, Political Staff

An independent inquiry into the Brighton bombing has largely cleared any security lapse, the report says. Mr. Leon Brittan, Secretary of State for the Home Office, told the Commons last night that the inquiry was satisfied that the police were not at fault for the failure to prevent the bombing.

Libel will for Sharon

Continued from page 1. The court found in favour of Sharon, who had claimed that the book was defamatory. The judge ruled that the book was not defamatory and that Sharon's claim was dismissed.

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DALE
GENERATING
SETS

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University of Jordan
Center of Strategic Studies
READING ROOM

WHITE HORSE
Fine Old
Scotch Whisky

Red faces as rebels spring a leak

By John Carvel, Local Government Correspondent

THE DEPARTMENT of the Environment, unaccustomed as it is to public leaks, was rocked yesterday by the disclosure of its plans to introduce a new system of local government.

True to convention on these occasions, the victims of the leak first denied its authenticity and then reached for their lawyers to claim that the other side was dealing in stolen goods.

Ministers are treating the matter as a hard evidence that local authority threats of united defiance against the Rates Act are no more than rhetorical bluster.

The minutes were handed to the leader of the Conservative group on the Commons, Mr. Robert Brierley, who is expected to publish them.

Mr. Brierley said that the minutes were a "leak" and that the Conservative group was not responsible for them. He said that the minutes were a "leak" and that the Conservative group was not responsible for them.

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Leader's breach with hard left over miners in open

Kinnock fury over Commons disruption

By James Naughtie and Alan Travis

Mr. Neil Kinnock and the Labour Party were engaged in a bitter struggle last night over the miners' strike after the party leader had lectured MPs on what he saw as the futility of a disruptive demonstration in the Commons.



Neil Kinnock — 'a leader's speech'

During the PLP meeting Mr. Tony Benn, Mr. Kevin Barron, Mr. Rother Valley, and Mr. Martin Flannery, MP for Sheffield Hillsborough, all attacked the leadership line.

Mr. Flannery referred to some members of the party who did not go on to a picket line for 10 months — a clear reference to Mr. Kinnock.

In response, the party leader was asking the group's tactics. He told them that if there were a debate in the Commons it would not focus on the case for coal or the social hardship of the strike, but rather on the Conservative's argument about the continuing return to work in the coalfields.

He said: "If they think the miners are helped or the Labour Party is helped by what they are doing then they are not living in the real world."

Mr. Kinnock's speech was greeted with cheering by many MPs. One frontbench MP said later: "That was a leader's speech. He should do it more often."

Last night's row was a full-on battle between Mr. Kinnock and his critics in the party, who have been muttering increasingly loudly about what they claim is his refusal to give full support to the National Union of Mineworkers.

His annoyance with Mr. Benn and his colleagues in the Campaign Group are well known, but last night's comments were his most public show of anger so far.

After the suspension, Mr. Benn rose in the Commons to say he wanted to give notice that many members were determined to secure a debate in Government time next week, and Mr. Dennis Skinner, the MP for Bolsover, shouted: "You ain't seen nothing yet."

Mr. Kinnock wants to dissociate himself from the group's tactics but he was in an increasingly embarrassing position last night since he knows that many party activists support a more aggressive line on the strike.

What is more, it is clear that a group of hardliners is determined to carry on the fight inside the PLP whatever the views of the leader.

The Speaker, Mr. Bernard Weatherill, had suspended the sitting after the protesters refused to accept his rulings, and the Commons was in a state of disarray.

During the lengthy procedural argument which preceded the suspension, Mr. Kinnock argued that backbenchers concerned about the strike were being denied debating time by the Government and, by implication, by the shadow cabinet, which controls a number of debating days.

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ROSEMARY'S BABIES: Rosemary Wood yesterday with the twins, which she conceived with the aid of a small box called apusatile infusion system strapped to her arm. She first tried the box, which periodically injects a hormone into the body, after being told by doctors that she would not be able to start a family. After giving birth to a son using the method two years ago she repeated the experiment to produce the twins, Richard and Katie.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gas main clue to blast

THE failure by British Gas to replace gas mains pipes might have led to the Putney explosion that killed eight people. Back page.

Editor accused

A JURY was told yesterday that the editor of the Observer misled police seeking a man who, it was feared, intended to kill himself. Page 2.

Stonehenge plan

A £3 MILLION scheme has been proposed to sweep away the clutter around Stonehenge. Page 3.



"Before you ask, yes I did get a lift, but it was with an ex-rabbit. Have you heard the one about the..."

Reading help

SPECIAL help is to be given to the one in five children in inner London who are unable to read by the age of eight. Page 4.

Muslim unrest

MUSLIM fundamentalism is threatening Malaysia's multi-ethnic calm, unbroken since 1969. Third World Review, page 11.

India adrift

INDIA were 134 runs behind England with six second innings wickets left in the fourth Test yesterday. Page 22.

Borrowing cut

THE Department of Health has cut by 40 per cent the amount local authorities can borrow to build homes for the elderly and handicapped. Page 2.

Market moves

FOUND down 0010 to \$1.185; FT index up 5.9 to 957.2; Dow Jones down 1.99 to 1228.69. Markets, page 20.

The weather

CLOUDY with some snow showers. Details, back page.

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Austria	24.00	Green	100.00
Belgium	45.00	Belgian	3.35
Denmark	8.50	Italian	1.80
France	56.00	Swiss	1.70
Germany	7.00	Swiss	1.70
Spain	3.50	Swiss	1.70

Borrowing over target by £1.5 bn

By Margaret Pagnano and Christopher Huhne

Share prices soared on the stock market yesterday morning, pushing the FT index of 30 leading companies to a new record peak as sterling and interest rates stabilised. Many dealers are now convinced that the market index is set to break the magic 1,000 barrier.

The pound had a quiet day on the foreign exchanges, trading down slightly to close 0.1 cent lower at \$1.185. The key interest rates at which banks lend to each other also eased.

Government bond dealers had marked down gilts sharply before the PSRA figures were released, after reports that borrowing for the year could exceed £3 billion. They recovered gently on the figures, but closed down on the day.

Equities also eased back in the afternoon to leave the FT index up 5.9 on the day at 957.2. The pound rose water as dealers awaited the outcome of the largest five industrial countries' finance ministers' meeting in Washington.

The Treasury now conceded that borrowing is likely to overshoot its revised target of £3.5 billion this year as the miners' strike has lasted longer than previously assumed and higher interest rates add to debt servicing costs, but no new forecast is available.

Robbers shoot 3 dead in army pay snatch

By David Pallister

Two soldiers and a civilian employee from the Scottish Infantry training depot at Glenrothes, near Edinburgh, were shot dead in a payroll robbery yesterday. The three men were private, a sergeant and a retired major — were on a routine trip in their Land Rover to pick up £17,000 from the Royal Bank of Scotland branch in Penicuik, about two miles away.

When they failed to return the army alerted the police and the Land Rover was found about a mile off the main road from Edinburgh to Biggar in the Pentlands Hills, south of the city.

The bodies were later discovered lying in the snow about three miles up a track leading to the Glenrothes reservoir. The police said that they had been killed with what appeared to be a handgun.

The men were named as Staff Sergeant Terence Hosker, a single man aged 38, with the Royal Army Corps; Private John Thomson, aged 25, of the King's Own Scottish Borders, who was married and came from Bradford; and retired major David Forbes Cunningham, aged 56, who worked as an administrative officer at the depot.

An army spokesman at the depot said the three had left at about 9 am for Penicuik. It was a regular journey but the day and the time varied from week to week. Because of bad road conditions due to snow they were expected to take about half an hour.

The Land Rover was first seen in a ditch by a local woman. A trail of blood up the remote single track road suggested that the three had been shot before their bodies were dumped near a deserted cottage.

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WE apologise to readers who yet again did not receive their copies of the paper yesterday. A continuing disagreement involving NGA composing chapels in London has meant late production of the paper and consequent effects upon early editions.

Pit breakaway gathers pace

By Keith Harper, Labour Editor

The growing divisions within the National Union of Mineworkers were exacerbated yesterday when Leicestershire became the third coalfield to join the ranks of those who are setting up breakaway unions within the coal industry.

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Mr. Kinnock's speech was greeted with cheering by many MPs. One frontbench MP said later: "That was a leader's speech. He should do it more often."

Last night's row was a full-on battle between Mr. Kinnock and his critics in the party, who have been muttering increasingly loudly about what they claim is his refusal to give full support to the National Union of Mineworkers.

A decision to ballot the Leicestershire men is expected to be taken at an area council meeting next week. This means that the breakaway union will have to wait nine years for Belvoir. We need all the security that the national union can provide, and the striking miners in Leicestershire will fight to see the NUM preserved," he said.

South Derbyshire's 3,200 NUM members are to be balloted on rule changes which would give the area more independence from the national union. The result of the ballot should be known by the week end and Mr. Arthur Scargill, the NUM president, who

Turn to back page, col. 7

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Tory MPs criticise Falklands veto deal

By Colin Brown, Political Correspondent

The Government last night faced Tory criticism over its handling of the new constitution for the Falkland Islands which gives the islanders a veto in future negotiations over their sovereignty.

The Prime Minister confirmed in the Commons yesterday that the Government would not be seeking to introduce a bill to enact the new constitution but instead would do so by an Order in Council, which could avoid any vote in the Commons.

Mr. Jonathan Aitken, the Conservative MP for Thanet South, later protested to the Leader of the House, Mr. John Biffen, that these arrangements were highly unsatisfactory to Tory MPs.

He said that the Government should go through without being presented to the Commons. "This just will not do," he said.

It is expected that Tory MPs will insist that they be given the chance to debate the new constitution on the constitutional arrangements which were disclosed to the Falkland Islanders at a recent meeting.

They were told that the Foreign Office had backed down on plans to divorce the Falklands from its dependencies of South Georgia and the South Sandwich group after the islanders had objected because they feared Britain might bargain away the sovereignty of the Falklands with Argentina while retaining the Antarctic dependencies which are strategically important.

Rail pay row likely

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Staff

Further rail disruption last night looked likely after union leaders agreed to demand a substantial pay rise from April 1 free of productivity strings.

The Federation of Rail Unions also warned the British Railways Board that it would consider national strike action if the board sued unions over yesterday's one-day strike.

British Rail faces a large financial loss this year because of the unions' blocking of coal trains. The Government plans to reduce its support by £245 million between 1984 and 1985, and BR is bound to take a tough line on pay this year.

Try-again Mastermind ruled out

By Dennis Barker

A Mastermind winner has been disqualified for the first time in the BBC 1 knowledge contest's 13 years because she appeared on the programme four years ago — answering questions about the Bible.

Mastermind's rules limit contestants to one appearance and all would-be contestants are asked to complete a form whether they have appeared on television, appeared on the programme, or attended a Mastermind rehearsal.

Mrs. Sheila Aitree, a school laboratory technician, aged 42, of Okehampton, Devon, one of 5,000 applicants, replied "no" to each question because, as she later told the producer, Mr. Peter Massey, since her divorce she considered herself a new person.

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Splash out on an auld acquaintance.

SKINLAY'S
FINEST SCOTCH WHISKY

STILL BLENDED BY A MACKINLAY, FIVE GENERATIONS LATER.

Anger as letters announce Fowler's borrowing limits

Councils' funds for old and ill cut by 40pc

By David Hencke,
Social Services Correspondent

The Department of Health has imposed a 40 per cent cut on the amount local authorities can borrow to build homes and provide facilities for the elderly, physically disabled, mentally handicapped, and mentally ill.

The economies—part of a public spending package agreed between the Chancellor and Mr Norman Fowler, the Social Services Secretary, last November—emerged only yesterday as social services departments received letters announcing new borrowing limits.

The Department of Health confirmed yesterday that the reduction, which takes effect in April, will reduce borrowing limits from £116 million to £70 million. The department said that not all authorities had used their powers to borrow the money, which was why the allocation had been reduced.

The news led to an immediate protest from the Association of Directors of Social Services, who are seeking a meeting with Mr Fowler to ask for a review.

Mr Neil Kay, director of social services for Sheffield, and a junior vice-president of the ADSS, said yesterday: "The amount we can borrow has been reduced from £17 million to £550,000. It means that we cannot proceed with plans for two centres for the elderly, and we will have to postpone a £300,000 programme to improve facilities for the physically disabled living at home. This means that we cannot install ramps

or lifts in the homes of the disabled."

He added that plans for new centres for the mentally handicapped will also be affected—in direct contradiction to government policy of encouraging the mentally handicapped to live in the community.

Mr Maurice Bishop, director of social services for Cleveland, said that the cuts would mean that the authority was unable to carry out the modernisation of old people's homes to bring them up to standards required under the Registered Homes Act.

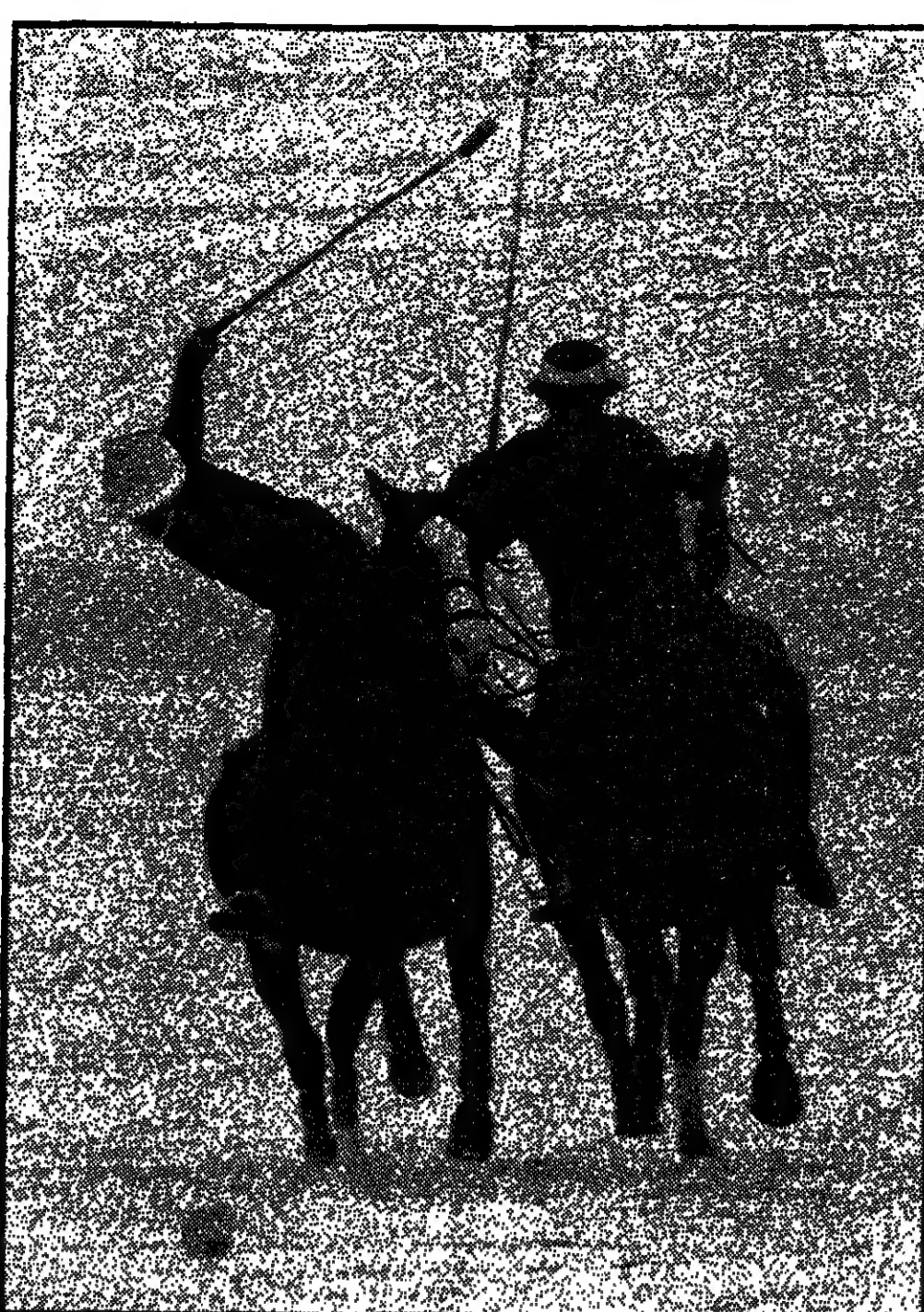
"We will still have four elderly people sharing one room, and at the same time we will be expected to inspect private homes and criticise them if they do not come up to standard," he said.

Other authorities expecting big cuts include most London boroughs and authorities like Derbyshire.

Prospects for spending on social services are bleak and thousands of people will suffer next year, Mr Adrienne Jones, president of the ADSS, said yesterday.

Launching a report by the association on the state of social services in England, which showed that spending had failed to keep up with demand.

She said that departments were under enormous pressure. They had to cope with a 52 per cent rise in the growth of private care for the elderly while a lack of cash was holding back the development of cost-effective schemes to cater for the elderly at home.



SHOOTING PRACTICE: Members of the British Army Polo Team, Major Nigel Hadden-Paton and Major Sean Mahony, practising on Smith's Lawn in Windsor Great Park yesterday for their tour of India next month. Picture by Kenneth Saunders

Observer editor 'misled police on leak charge man'

By Paul Keel

A jury was told yesterday that the editor of the Observer misled police trying to find a civil servant who they feared intended to kill himself after giving the newspaper confidential information.

Raymond Williams, aged 38, who denies two charges of corruptly receiving a total of £1,500 from the Observer in return for information given while he was a senior executive officer with the Defence Ministry in Bath, had disappeared after leaving a suicide note with his wife.

His wife, who he had told about his dealings with the Observer and of his anxiety about an article the newspaper had published, contacted police in Bath. Mr Paul Chadd, QC, defending, told Bristol Crown Court.

A detective constable telephoned the Observer and spoke to Mr Patrick Bishop, a reporter who had interviewed Mr Williams, the jury heard.

Mr Chadd said that after initially making no comment, the reporter rang the officer back to say that his editor could recall no person of that name and that no sum of money had been paid to him.

Told by the detective that it was a life and death matter and that Mr Williams's wife was extremely concerned, Mr Bishop said the newspaper's editor would contact the police.

Mr Chadd said that later on the evening of November 16, 1983, a person describing himself as the editor of the Observer rang the detective and said: "I don't know that person, nor has any money been paid to him. All I can say is that a man of that description has been seen in London alive and well today."

The Observer's editor was then alleged to have added: "All I can say is that a man of that description was in a position of sufficient resources to go abroad."

Mr Chadd told the jury that the editor knew this because

Mr Williams had visited the newspaper that day and been given £500 in cash in addition to an earlier cheque for £1,000. Mr Chadd went on to say that one but that creature had suggested that this man might go abroad. The editor was leading the Bath police to believe that the man was contemplating leaving the country.

Mr Chadd told the jury that he did not want them to believe that the Observer "stands in white in this case."

Earlier Mr Chadd had said that the essence of the case was whether Mr Williams's acceptance of the payments was corrupt. He suggested that it was difficult for one person to be corrupt in accepting money while the person who gave it was not.

Had the newspaper been on trial with Mr Williams it would have been possible to examine what relationship and what financial arrangements it had made.

Mr Chadd said Mr Williams offered the newspaper information in a desperate attempt to be taken on as a defence counsel to earn extra money to help him out of severe financial difficulties.

He described the two documents which Mr Williams is alleged to have passed to the Observer as "crucial" letters which would have given the article about Admiralty over-spending which the newspaper published on November 13, 1983.

Mr Chadd said that had Mr Williams's purpose been corrupt, he would have passed over classified information which would have given the Observer a field day and a greater source of money for himself.

As examples, he said Mr Williams could have told the Observer details of unnecessary expenditure on storage of Trident missiles; Britain's equipping of the Argentine navy six months before the South Atlantic conflict; faulty SAS equipment during Falklands war; and the steps the Navy had taken to contain the Argentine navy.

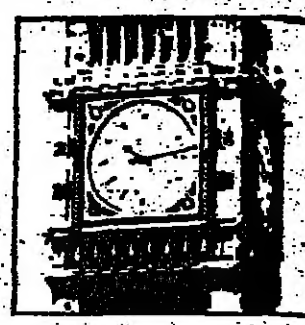
Mr Chadd said the Observer led Mr Williams to believe that the £1,500 was the first of regular payments. He thought of it as a retainer.

The newspaper told him nothing of its intention to publish the article, in which material from the two letters was used. Mr Williams would have known that publication would lead to his identification because the documents had had only a limited circulation.

"By doing that they ended his administrative career without the slightest intention of giving any kind of employment," Mr Chadd said. "This fool man has dealt with them on that basis," Mr Chadd said. "The case continues."



Raymond Williams — 'Years after suicide note'



David McKie

Routine business, routine ruckus

BUSINESS questions: Neil Kinnock rises to ask the Leader of the House when we can expect the publication of the Public Expenditure White Paper; also when the House will get its chance to take up the issues of surrogate parenthood. Routine, uncontentious stuff: what matters much more is what he hasn't said. He has not pressed the Government for an immediate vote in the House on the 10-month-old pit dispute.

There follows a barrage of Labour interventions: from Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, David Nellist, Terry Fields — and it is instantly clear that something is up. They all have two things in common. They have members of the Campaign Group of "outside left" MPs, and they are demanding an immediate debate on the dispute.

Their ostensible target is the Leader of the House, John Biffen, who has offered them a list of Long Kong and the rates instead. But their real target is much more Mr Kinnock for his failure to pitch the coal strike into the heart of the political battle.

Another Prime Minister's question time has just come and gone without Mr Kinnock harrying the Government on this score, and indeed with Mrs Thatcher, as so often, raising it herself as a grievance of the people against Labour.

That was how it began. More Campaign Groupers — Martin Redmond, Bob Perry, Ron Brown, Ernie Roberts, Martin Flannery — kept the theme boiling through business questions.

And then came the points of order. Mr Benn (adding the allegation that miners who have gone back to work have found themselves taking police cars); Mr Heffer; Dennis Skinner was

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ing an early debate so that the House might hear more of the Heath thought on the subject, and a whole queue of others eager to hurl themselves into the action to keep the operation going.

Mr Heffer tried for an emergency debate. But for that, said the Speaker, he'd need to show that some new issue was at stake. "The old weather," he asked a hopeful Labour voice. "The cold weather," said Mr Speaker, "is not a new circumstance that has arisen since noon today."

He demanded order: the House stood its ground. On the front bench the Minister, Mr John Biffen, counted the time now being lost from the afternoon's debate, potentially so embarrassing for the Government on regional aid. "The Speaker," he said, "is not a referee, he is a referee."

For twenty minutes we were left to imagine the scenes downstairs. Would they go on? Somewhere, perhaps, militant miners were arguing for the right to moderate militants urged that thus far was enough.

The House reassembled. Tony Benn rose to speak for them. "A substantial body of members," he said, "are determined to secure a debate next week." The Tories giggled. Mr Skinner devoted them with his scowl. "You say," he told them, "seen nothing yet."

So to the regions, with Norman Tebbit adding the new, slimmed down strategy which so upset some backbenchers when announced in his absence before Christmas, the brand-new anti-writer of his four months' moratorium.

Essential, he said, with his customary cheer, "to keep the expenditure in check. No money would be lost. It would simply be re-scheduled. But it wasn't lost money that was being consigned to the past. It was lost projects signed and sealed under their aid shot from under them. They could not be of course, but only at Nigel's new rates."

Mr Tebbit gazed upon Labour with his characteristic blend of simulated concern and deep natural contempt. The longer the Opposition was out of office, he mused, the more they would remember what responsibility felt like.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man admits killing two teenagers

PETER Murray, aged 36, killed two teenagers in the Peak District while on six days home leave from Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, a Manchester Crown Court jury was told yesterday.

Murray yesterday changed his plea to guilty of murdering Mitchell Elgar and Martin Pollitt and guilty of a murder plot on the third day of the trial of himself and three other men. He will be sentenced when the trial finishes of Michael Howe and Michael Bailey, both 20, of Cheshire Heath, Greater Manchester, and John Derek Bannister, 21, of no fixed address, who have all pleaded not guilty.

Ford women panel

AN independent panel set up to investigate the grievances of Ford's women sewing machinists will be headed by Professor Angela Bowey, of Strathclyde University. The company's nominee is Mr Peter Yeeles, an industrial relations expert at the University of Birmingham. The union nominee is Mrs Susan Hastings, a research associate of the Trade Union Research Unit, Oxford.

Theft men on bail

TWO more of the five men charged last week in connection with the theft and illegal export to Argentina of parts from the Rolls-Royce marine engine plant at Ansty, Warwickshire, Derek Bondfield, aged 43, and Colin Bain, aged 44, were granted bail yesterday. Only one man, Peter Galvin, aged 45, now remains in custody.

Drug co-operation

MORE than 60 voluntary and statutory bodies agreed at a meeting in Liverpool last night to combine to fight drug abuse in the Merseyside area. With support from the local health authority, the police, and leading churchmen, they set up a standing committee to monitor the drug scene, encourage research, identify deficiencies and recommend action.

RCN share sale

THE Royal College of Nursing yesterday agreed to sell its shares in tobacco companies, a spokesman said. The decision follows last Sunday's report by the British Medical Association showing how numerous health organisations hold shares in companies with tobacco interests.

Queen's visit

THE Queen yesterday spent half an hour with Mrs Margaret Tebbit, the wife of the industry secretary, Mr Norman Tebbit, at Stoke Mandeville hospital in Buckinghamshire. Mrs Tebbit was paralysed in the Brighton bombing in October.

Conflict over polytechnic student nears end with light reprimands

By Andrew Moncur

The 10-month conflict at the Polytechnic of North London appeared to be nearing its end last night after 15 students on disciplinary charges had been let off with reprimands.

The rulings were shrugged aside by leaders of the students' union who, after a series of meetings this week, now seem to be poised to turn their militant energies to other causes — and away from the issue of Patrick Harrington, who has been expelled from the National Front, whose presence has led to unrest.

Veterans come into their own

By David Fairbairn,
Defence Correspondent

A disbanded 50-man engineering team which used to maintain the RAF's ancient propeller-driven Shackletons may have to be reformed to keep the machines in the air for another 18 months, because the Nimrod airborne refuelling aircraft scheduled to replace them are still not available. Another possibility being considered by the Defence Ministry is putting the major servicing work the Shackletons require out to private industry.

The Shackleton first flew in 1949 and its radar, though still apparently useful for air defence surveillance, is in the same veteran class. The remaining squadron, based at Lossiemouth in Scotland, was to have been phased out this year as the Nimrod took over. But the airborne early warning (AEW) version of this aircraft — Britain's equivalent of the American AWACS — is about two years late, mainly because of a succession of problems with its advanced Marconi radar system. An overhauling problem has now been solved, but a joint RAF and industrial team at Waddington in Lincolnshire is still struggling to make it work reliably. Then it has to be tuned to distinguish and track the multiple targets — including, if necessary, low-flying Soviet cruise missiles — it was designed to handle.

Air Chief Marshal Sir David Craig, the Commander-in-Chief, Strike Command, said yesterday that he was confident that the Nimrod AEW would eventually meet its specification. It might cost £1 million to put up to five Shackletons through major servicing, but he believed the money would be found because NATO gave a high priority to the security of the UK air defence region and no one would want a gap to develop. Shackletons had been involved in many of the 150 interceptions of intruding Soviet aircraft carried out by the RAF last year.

The costly delay in the Nimrod programme is the main reason why this year's RAF budget promised at one stage to be £800 million overspent. One economy measure to correct this has been a temporary cut in fuel consumption for routine flying, which should end next month.

They believe that he has now been effectively isolated and cannot possibly operate as an organiser for the Front, or whose national directorate he serves. Student leaders want to switch attention to the more urgent issues of rate-capping, which could have a serious impact on the polytechnic's finances, and the rift dispute.

Mr Harrington will today be left in no doubt of the strong feeling he arouses among student activists. But no unlawful attempt to block his entry to the canteen at the polytechnic's Holloway Road centre has been planned. Instead he will have to run a gauntlet of opponents who will line the entrance corridor.

He is likely to find that he is eating alone as other students boycott the dining room. His solicitor has said that he will exercise his legal right, confirmed in the High Court on Monday, to use the canteen during his weekly lecture session at a house set aside for his use in nearby Benwell Road.

If peace is restored it will be a conspicuous success for the newly-appointed acting director, Dr John Beishon, who has taken swift action to return the polytechnic to order.

Judge urges rights for relatives in child cases

An Appeal Court judge said yesterday that other relatives should be consulted by local authorities over the future of children rejected by their parents.

As three judges disagreed about what steps to take over a girl called Sarah, aged four, who was loved and wanted by relatives but not by her parents, Lord Justice Neill said: "It would be desirable that members of the wider family should be given a statutory right to be heard in proceedings involving infant children to whom they are closely related." But that was not the existing law.

He and the appeal judge allowed an appeal by Hertfordshire County Council against a High Court decision to make Sarah a ward of court. This will allow the council to take steps to have Sarah adopted. She is now with foster-parents.

But the judges said that Sarah's aunt and uncle, who wanted to adopt her, would still be considered as adoptive parents.

The third judge, Lord Justice Purchas, believed that the wardship approved by a High Court judge, Mr Justice Ewbank, should continue.

Last year the parents asked the council to take Sarah into care, and they had agreed to her being adopted. The aunt and uncle, with the support of the child's grandparents, said they wanted to adopt her, and made her a ward of court towards that end.

Sarah's parents said that they did not mind whether she was adopted by relatives or strangers, but her relatives claimed that the possibility of her going to them had not been properly investigated by the council.

Sarah's grandparents, aunt and uncle were given permission to take their case to the House of Lords, and she will remain a ward of court in the meantime.

IBA asks Thames for Dallas deal explanation

By Dennis Barker

Mr Bryon Cowgill, Thames TV's managing director, was summoned to the Independent Broadcasting Authority in London yesterday to explain his company's acquisition of the American soap opera Dallas from under the nose of the BBC.

Mr Cowgill told the director-general of the IBA, Mr John Whitney, that Thames saw no reason to pull out of the deal, which had been signed and was legally binding. It was a perfectly good deal in ethical and financial terms, he said.

An IBA official said that the talks, which followed the BBC's allegation that Thames had broken from accepted practice in poaching a running series, had been called to "clarify what is undoubtedly a fairly cloudy picture as far as we are concerned."

Thames offended its less wealthy ITV colleagues by buying the series without consulting them. Granada and Yorkshire have already said that they do not plan to show it, and it follows suit. Thames could be left to pay the entire £1.4 million for the next 26 episodes. Gabriella Drake is to take over the running of the motel in Crossroads after Ronald Allen and Sue Lloyd leave the programme, Central TV announced yesterday.

Gabriella Drake: new face at motel

over the running of the motel in Crossroads after Ronald Allen and Sue Lloyd leave the programme, Central TV announced yesterday.

David Frost, one of the survivors of the group which set up the breakfast television channel TV-am, has signed a new one-year contract to appear on the station, it was announced yesterday. Ratings for his Sunday morning show have trebled since he started presenting it in 1983.

The women from Cardiff and the Rhondda Valley, were before Cardiff magistrates for failing to pay £20 fines arising from a demonstration last year at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Llanishan, Cardiff.

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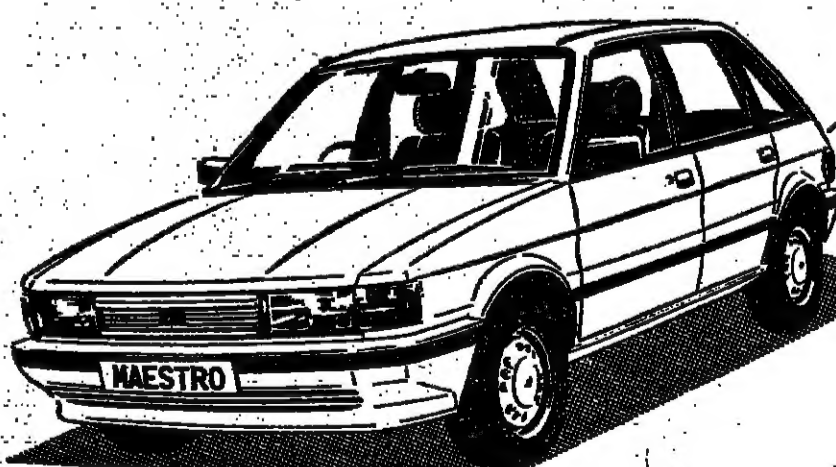
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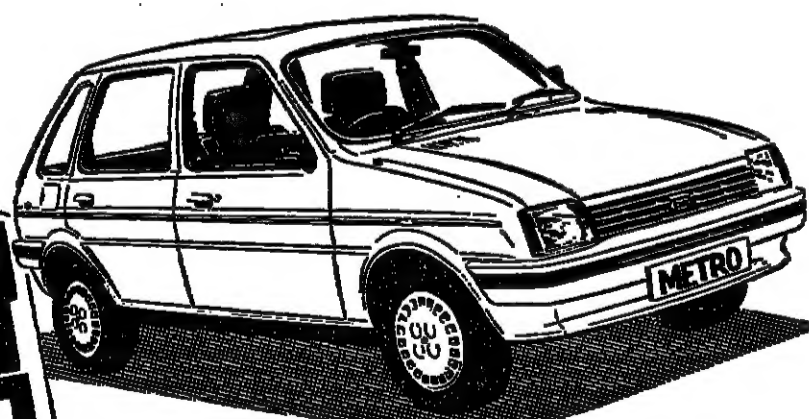
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AUSTIN ROVER

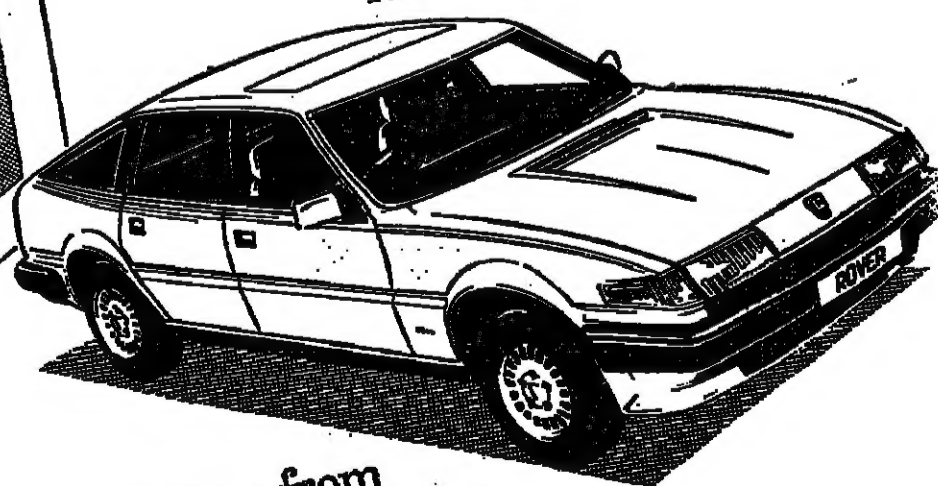
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Austin Rover

THE DAY IN POLITICS

PM does not shut out Soviets



VE DAY

THE Prime Minister did not rule out yesterday the possibility of a Soviet presence at the planned 40th anniversary commemoration of VE day in May.

Mrs Thatcher came under heavy pressure at question time from the Ulster Unionist MP, Mr Enoch Powell, to invite a Moscow representative to the planned commemoration.

Replying to a call from the Tory backbenchers, the Prime Minister assured MPs that the Government would also mark the August anniversary of the end of the war in the Far East.

Mrs Powell urged Mrs Thatcher to recognise the contribution of the Soviet people to victory in Europe. Mr Powell asked the Prime Minister to find a place

Minister to "direct your mind to the best way in which, in the framework of the commemoration, there can be a place for the representation of the Russian people, whose sufferings, whose fortitude and whose valour made our own survival and our victory possible."

Mrs Thatcher promised: "Yes, of course I will bear that factor in mind."

Earlier Mr Robert Rhodes James (C, Cambridge) reminded the Prime Minister that VE day did not mark the end of the second world war.

Mr Rhodes James said that tens of thousands of young people from Britain and the Commonwealth, including members of his own family, had served and suffered in the Far East campaign.

Mrs Thatcher assured him that she was very much aware of the "important and brave part" played by so many people in the war in

the Far East and of the victory in August 1945. "We shall of course remember both occasions in these celebrations or commemorations which we have," she said.

Mrs Thatcher will answer questions on British VE-Day celebrations when she goes to Bonn today — weather permitting. The Prime Minister is to meet Chancellor Dr Helmut Kohl, for whom the celebrations have become delicate politically. The Germans are thought to want a fairly low-key affair. With Mrs Thatcher are expected to be the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Environment Secretary, Patrick Jenkin, and Trade Minister Paul Channon. They will return the same day.

● The White House announced yesterday that the Prime Minister will visit Washington on February 2 to resume the talks on East-West relations she held with President Reagan on December 22.

Belgrano affair in new venue

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Members of the Commons defence committee are now anxious to investigate aspects of the continuing controversy surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano during the Falklands conflict. Their concern has been prompted by the growing number of contradictions given in evidence to the foreign affairs committee.

Both Tory and Labour MPs on the defence committee believe that it is more appropriate for them to investigate some of the issues that have recently been thrown up, including the whole question of political control of the military.

Back-bench MPs are concerned and intrigued about the long letter sent by Mrs Thatcher to the Labour foreign affairs spokesman, Mr George Foulkes, on Wednesday. She said that Lord Lewin, then Chief of Defence Staff and her senior military adviser, did not know about a crucial signal from the submarine Conqueror reporting the sighting of the Belgrano on May 1, 1982.

Labour MPs on the foreign affairs committee have succeeded, meanwhile, in getting the endorsement of their Tory colleagues to press ahead with their inquiry into the Belgrano sinking. They have drawn up a list of detailed questions to Mrs Thatcher, Lord Lewin and the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine.

Spending plans

The Government is to publish its spending plans for 1985-86 to 1987-88 next Tuesday in the Public Expenditure White Paper, the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson disclosed yesterday in a Commons written reply.

Four-month freeze on regional grants

REGIONAL AID

By Alan Travis

THE Trade and Industry Secretary, Mr Norman Tebbit, announced in the Commons yesterday a four-month moratorium on the payment of regional development grants which took effect at midnight last night.

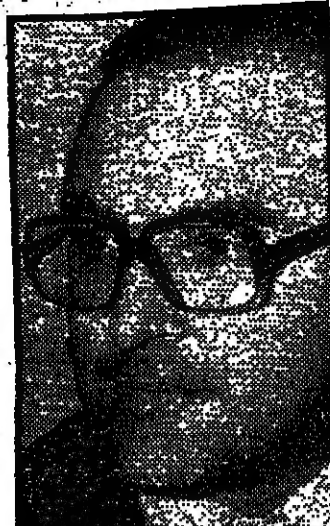
The announcement brought immediate Labour protests that the moratorium would hit the cash flow of companies in assisted areas, which would now have to borrow the money at the new, higher interest rates.

During a debate on regional policy Mr Tebbit said that the old regional development grant scheme and the new scheme for regional aid which came into operation in November would run side by side, with considerable overlap.

In 1983 we estimated that spending on regional industrial incentives in the year about to commence, 1983-84, would be just under £500 million. It is now clear that with the new policy for regional aid, expenditure would have increased to well over £600 million and such a bulge of expenditure simply could not be afforded.

"We are therefore introducing today a four-month moratorium on the payment of old-style regional development grants. It means there will be a four-month gap between the approval of an application and payment. This will apply until further notice. It will not apply to properly completed applications for grant which were either received or postmarked before midnight (last night) nor will it apply to the new RDG scheme.

The moratorium will ensure that next year we spend no more on regional industrial incentives than we forecast in 1983. He claimed that there would not be any substantive reduction in the amount spent next year compared to the 1983 forecast. "Nor will grants be lost," he said. "They will only be delayed," said Mr Tebbit. Companies in designated areas wishing to receive grants can still apply and be



Mr Smith — deep concern

given approval, but the payment would not start until four months later, unless there is an intervening period of a material change in circumstances by reference to which the application for grant was approved or determined. Requests for priority treatment of particular cases will not be considered as this would be unfair to our applicants, said the Department of Trade and Industry.

The announcement was made during a debate on the government review of regional policy aimed at cutting the regional aid budget by £500 million in the next three years.

The results of the review were announced in November and will include the merging of the three-tier structure of assisted areas into two, with the top level Special Development Areas disappearing. This change will save £150 million and a similar sum is expected to be saved by the ending of grants for replacement of plant and machinery.

Mr Tebbit said that the new policy was aimed at reducing the imbalance between the prosperous and the most hard-hit areas of Britain. In the past major companies shopped around for the

highest grant rates to locate their branches, but then just cut back when those branches were hit by recession. It merely shuffled jobs from one area to another, said Mr Tebbit. That 35 per cent of the population would benefit from the new policy and it gave maximum access to the European Regional Development Fund.

In 1987-88 there will be savings of £300 million a year on what we would have spent with the old policy of regional aid. The money that is to be spent will be spent more effectively and the Chancellor will be happy.

Mr John Smith, Opposition spokesman on trade and industry, expressed deep concern about the sudden announcement of the moratorium.

"You will know the effects of this will be to do considerable damage to many companies that are dependent upon regional assistance for their viability."

There would be substantial effects on the cash flow of the companies involved as they would now have signed binding contracts for goods and services on the basis that they thought they would have had the money from the Government.

"They may be able to borrow to cover the difficulty of the four months, but they will have to pay the interest rates, which are higher as a result of recent government policy."

He said that Mr Tebbit could not have it both ways. There was the same amount of money available for the new policy, in which case it should be spent now, or the moratorium amounted to a new cutback, said Mr Smith.

"If there is no real change and this is merely creative accounting, then there ought to be no need for the moratorium."

Mr Alan Beith, the Liberal chief whip, said the moratorium and the policy review were a double blow to those areas which have been excluded from the regional development map.

He said those who were seeking the last chance from the scheme and had brought forward projects to set within the scheme would now be in the cold for four months.

Laker hits BA sale

By Jim Naughtie

The Government admitted yesterday that the privatisation of British Airways will be significantly delayed by the current court room battle being waged in the United States against the airline by Sir Freddie Laker.

Mr Michael Spicer, a Transport Under-Secretary, said in a Commons written answer: "There is some slippage in the plans for privatising British Airways because of the uncertainties created by the application of US anti-trust law to air services under the Bermuda 2 Aviation Agreement including the US civil law suits following the collapse of Laker Airways."

"It remains my firm intention, however, to proceed with the privatisation as soon as practicable in the next financial year."

Blacks renew call to Labour

By Stephen Cook

A fresh attempt to persuade the Labour Party to set up formal black sections at local, regional and national level is being made by the national steering committee of the two dozen unofficial black sections already in existence.

The committee has sent a document to constituency Labour Parties arguing the case for black sections to be set up like women's sections and the Young Socialists. It also suggests how CLPs should respond to a consultation document on the issue sent to them recently by the party's national executive.

"We believe black people must be involved in the process of discussion and formulation so that we can advise and criticise from the perspective of our disadvantage," the document says. "Black sections are a means of giving a black voice formally established in the party."

"The party must recognise that special steps like this are needed urgently to redress the racial imbalance in our ranks. We must break the vicious cycle of 'no black representation' leading to racist policies which alienate black people and make them unwilling to join us. We will need, in the short term, forms of 'positive action' to tackle the problem."

The call for black sections has aroused strong opposition from the party's leadership, including the leader, Mr Neil Kinnock. A working party is still considering the issue, but a resolution calling for black sections was defeated at last year's party conference.

The new steering committee document says it is "scandalous" that there are no black MPs for a party which derives one million votes — one-eighth of its support — from black people.

taken to ensure that black people play a full part in selections. Where black people have been nominated, they must be shortlisted for selection as prospective MPs and councillors. There should be reserved places on the national executive for blacks, it adds.

The document also says that the Labour Party has suffered from "institutional racism." It has no black advisers or officials, it says, and election manifestos make only passing reference to the needs of black people. It says the Parliamentary Party has repeatedly carved into "racist ideology on immigration and nationality."

It also warns of a tendency for black voters, particularly the young to abstain from elections, thus reducing Labour's chances of winning the marginal urban seats it needs to form a government. There are estimated to be 37 marginals where black voters could effectively determine who wins.

"Positive action must be

There's no need to move your establishment to the Mediterranean to enjoy the warmth.

A lot of hotel managements have discovered how to take the chill off their heating bills and give their guests a warm welcome at the same time.

With gas. Two recent developments have made all the difference.

First: since 1983 supplies of gas have become more available.

Hotels that have been using other fuels have found they could now turn to gas.

Second: the latest gas equipment is getting more fuel-efficient.

That's what's happened at the Britannia Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool.

They changed over to modern gas boilers for space heating. They used new direct-fired gas heating in a Banqueting Suite.

Result: banquet indeed. Saving of 52% on fuel costs.

At the Ariel Hotel in Harmondsworth they were already enjoying the benefits of gas.

But they enjoyed it even more when they

replaced their old gas boilers for the latest ones and found a 40% fuel saving.

Many hotels, up and down the country, from cosy little places in the country, to gigantic palaces in our main cities are taking advantage of the new developments in gas.

Don't you think your hotel ought to be getting the benefits too?

Contact Commercial Sales at your British Gas region, and we'll analyse both your present and future fuel requirements.

We'll advise you on the right equipment for your needs.

You'll probably be pleasantly surprised by the very welcome savings you'll make.

Gas

GAS IS WONDERFUL

Short money set to grow

By Colin Brown

The assistance to the opposition parties known as "short money" will be increased by about 39 per cent next week after a late night debate in the Commons.

The assistance to the Labour Party will be raised from about £317,000 to about £440,000. The Liberal Party which currently receives £60,000 and the SDP, who get £45,000, will have similar increases.

The substantial increase over the amount granted by the Commons in March last year is intended to enable the opposition parties, including Plaid Cymru and the Ulster Unionists, to operate at Westminster without the need of a further increase during the present Parliament.

It is understood that the Government had argued in favour of an increase more in line with the inflation rate of about 5 per cent. But the opposition parties successfully forced them to accept the need for a larger increase to carry them over the next three years.

Although the principle of providing public money for the opposition parties was established in 1975 by the then Labour Cabinet minister, Mr Ted Short, some Tory MPs remain opposed to the idea. These include Mr Harvey Proctor (Billerica), who objected to the increase last year although he did not vote against it.

Mr Proctor said he was opposed to aid for political parties in principle and in detail. It is likely that some Tory MPs will share his view and oppose the increases when they are brought before the Commons for approval on Wednesday night.

The distribution of the money is made according to the number of seats and votes polled for each of the opposition parties in the last general election. Because Labour's support fell they had a cut last year from the maximum of £325,000 to £317,000.

Next week

HOUSE OF COMMONS
Monday: House of Commons Bill (Second Reading) Order.
Tuesday: House of Commons Bill (Second Reading) Order.
Wednesday: House of Commons Bill (Second Reading) Order.
Thursday: House of Commons Bill (Second Reading) Order.
Friday: House of Commons Bill (Second Reading) Order.
HOUSE OF LORDS
Monday: Presentation of Offences Bill (Committee) Second Reading.
Tuesday: Presentation of Offences Bill (Committee) Second Reading.
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Owen style makes Welsh hackles rise

By Paul Heyland, Welsh Correspondent

Rumblings of discontent within the Social Democratic Party about policies and Dr David Owen's style of leadership have surfaced in Wales, where an agreement on joint selection of candidates was secured despite stiff opposition from the party's London headquarters.

Mr Gwynor Jones, the chairman of the SDP in Wales, is calling for greater democracy within the party and a concentration on policies to "counter the myth that we are a one-man band bolstering up the Tories."

The former Labour MP for Carmarthen, who helped to turn the SDP in Wales, has become increasingly outspoken about the organisation of the party since Mr Roy Jenkins relinquished the leadership.

A former parliamentary private secretary to Mr Jenkins in a Labour administration, Mr Jones is concerned by the manner in which he says the SDP has become increasingly controlled by supporters of Dr Owen.

He has stood down from the party's national committee because of the pressure of work, but still attends speaking engagements in England as well as Wales, "which qualify me to speak out on matters that are being widely discussed by members in private."

Mr Jones, the assistant education officer for West Glamorgan, is worried that Dr Owen appears to have "too great an affection" for some of the Tories' policies. He claimed: "David is one of the most significant politicians of our day but at times he does tend to have the same black and white approach as that adopted by Mrs Thatcher."

He goes down the same road on some economic issues and he was taking the same hard line on the miners' strike. Some of the activities on the picket lines have been wrong and democracy was usurped, but there is also a genuine fear about the loss of jobs. David has mellowed on the miners' strike, if only because he has kept quiet about the issue for a long time."

Mr Jones said: "We should clearly be seen as a party which is against the establishment, which is against what Mrs Thatcher is doing, which is for the disadvantage and appreciates people's fears of nuclear weapons."

He questioned what he described as Dr Owen's "tight rein" on the party. "Roy Jenkins was a much freer leader. I who understood that criticism was never made personally. I believe David is anxious to ensure that nothing goes wrong and those who begin to question actions, policy or speeches are regarded as renegades, which is a classic way of trying to make you feel that you don't matter in other people's eyes. A new party, if it cannot afford to be radical in its early years, will soon become

a very conservative organisation.

Newspaper profiles presenting Dr Owen as an admirable captain with a maverick streak have annoyed Mr Jones. "These articles about a maverick leader surrounded by rabble and pigmies, with an Alliance partner of no importance, are totally wrong. I want David to renounce all this," he said.

"This is a party of dedicated people. I want David to say that he is an Alliance man. This is not a one-man band. If he was to disappear from the scene this party would survive because it was founded on principles and not personalities."

He continued: "I find it disturbing to see the party's newspaper being dominated by one man. People will soon become fed up with seeing David's picture on page after page."

"I don't think the party is democratic enough and it is not open enough on policy for

mulation. It is almost as if it is completely without honour to question the preservation of policy. However, there are encouraging signs since regional committees are now being set up in England along similar lines to the Welsh Scottish models. They clearly understand the need to organise themselves to combat centralism."

The reluctance of SDP leaders to embrace joint selection has dismayed Mr Jones. "You don't pretend to break the mould of British politics by tinkering with one or two seats," he said.

Dr Owen's speculation about the Alliance having a persuasive role to play in the event of a hung Parliament at the next general election has further disappointed Mr Jones.

"You don't get your troops working by telling them that they are not going to win," he said.

He added: "If I was asked by my leader to join a Tory coalition I would join it. I would not get a couple of seats in a Tory Cabinet, then some vision."

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The paper profiles
Mr Owen as an admirer
of a man with a money
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Jones — ex-Labour MP
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You've heard the fallacies about the NHS drugs bill. Now here are the facts.

From the 1st April the Department of Health proposes to cut the range of medicines prescribable on the NHS. This means that many valuable treatments will not be freely available in any form.

Below we present some facts and fallacies about medicines and their costs to Britain. We hope that this information will help you to understand why this bureaucratic plan (which would reduce NHS doctors' prescribing freedom, impair the treatment of some patients and harm the British pharmaceutical industry) is as unnecessary as it is uncaring.

FALLACY: The NHS medicines bill is rapidly escalating and running out of control.

FACT: Over the past 20 years the medicines bill, as a proportion of total NHS expenditure, has remained almost constant. It is still under 10 per cent of NHS costs.

FALLACY: There are as many as 17,000 products available on the NHS TWICE as many as 25 years ago.

FACT: When government ministers refer to 17,000 products they are talking about product licences, the numbers of which have, in fact, halved not doubled since 1971. Doctors prescribe almost entirely from a range of just over 2,000 products listed in the Monthly Index of Medical Specialities (MIMS).

FALLACY: Doctors' prescribing in the UK is excessive.

FACT: Doctors in this country write on average 6.5 prescriptions per patient a year. Doctors in comparable developed countries — such as Germany, France, Italy and Spain — write almost twice as many prescriptions for each patient.

FALLACY: Medicine prices in this country are too high and are unfair to the taxpayer.

FACT: Medicine prices in this country are competitive with those in other major manufacturing nations — and have been subject to government regulation since 1957. Per head, Britain spends on medicines about half the amount recorded in Germany, France, America or Japan. The average cost to the taxpayer of an NHS prescription is just over £4. The average cost of treating an NHS patient in hospital is around £550 a week.

FALLACY: Pharmaceutical companies make excessive profits.

FACT: Pharmaceutical companies, on average, earn a real return on historic capital of 17-18 per cent on sales to the NHS — the same as the average profit for manufacturing industry as a whole.

FALLACY: The pharmaceutical companies are mainly multi-national, and make little contribution to the nation's economy.

FACT: Pharmaceutical exports from the UK by multi-national research based companies exceed imports by some £650 million a year — a considerable benefit to British taxpayers and the national economy.

FALLACY: Pharmaceutical companies are not producing any really worthwhile new products.

FACT: In the last 25 years there have been major new products for the treatment of, for example, asthma, epilepsy, heart disease, ulcers, virus diseases, high blood pressure, Parkinson's disease, leukaemia in children, some other cancers and mental illnesses. Furthermore new drugs have played a major role in saving the lives of patients needing heart, kidney and liver transplants.

FALLACY: The Government's proposals will save taxpayers £100 million.

FACT: Costs arising from the measures — unemployment benefits to former pharmaceutical company employees, re-employment costs, lost exports, could cost taxpayers more than the community will gain. In practical terms the only 'savings' to the taxpayer would come from the pockets of the sick, the elderly and the unemployed, who on occasions would have to pay directly for the medicines they need.

These are the facts. Do you really believe there is a case for setting up a 'limited list' of medicines for NHS patients?

The plan would damage severely the one British industry that is at present able to compete with the Americans, the Japanese and the Germans in international markets. Write to your MP at the House of Commons, London SW1.



Fighting for a healthier future.

NEWS
IN BRIEFBill to
reinstate
officers

NINE Spanish officers, expelled from the army in 1975 for belonging to an organisation which calls for democratic reform, may be readmitted to their posts this year if a special bill is passed through the Cortes, writes *Jane Walker* from Madrid.

The officers, one major and eight captains who formed the *Democrático Militar* Union at the time when it was still illegal for army officers to take part in political activities, were sentenced for "conspiracy".

Mr Alfonso Guerra, the Deputy Prime Minister, has announced that the Government plans to introduce the bill.

Leader to hang

THE leader of Sudan's banned Republican Brothers party, Mr Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, aged 76, and four of his followers are due to be hanged today for opposing Islamic law. They were convicted of distributing pamphlets against implementing Islamic law and anti-government incitement. — *Reuter*.

Gibraltar link

SPANISH and Moroccan delegations yesterday discussed proposals for a permanent link, either bridge or tunnel across the nine-mile Strait of Gibraltar. The project, which could take 30 years to achieve, is expected to cost \$3 billion. — *Reuter*.

'Mermaid' peril

THE dugong or "sea cow", mistaken by seafarers in the days of sailing ships for the mythical mermaid, is in danger of extinction in the Indian Ocean region, India marine scientists said yesterday. At least 240 dugongs were slaughtered illegally by fishermen last year. — *Reuter*.

Torturer to die

A UKRAINIAN, originally gaoled for deserting the Soviet army and later paroled, has been sentenced to death for torturing people in the Second World War, a Moscow newspaper said yesterday. A Mysnar has been found guilty of torturing inmates at a death camp he helped to run. — *Reuter*.

Boycott call

A BELGIAN airline, Trans-European Airways, responsible for the controversial airlift of Ethiopian Jews to Israel, is likely to be put on an Arab blacklist at an Arab League meeting in Tunis on Monday. The call for a boycott was made by 16 league ambassadors meeting in Brussels on Wednesday. — *Reuter*.

Warship decision

THE Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr David Lange, said yesterday that a decision on whether to allow visits by nuclear-powered US warships had been postponed until the end of the month.

Russian assault

SOVIET forces have begun an airborne assault to free Afghan government troops besieged by rebels in eastern Afghanistan, Western diplomats said yesterday in New Delhi. Fighting was also reported in Kabul where three rockets landed in the presidential compound. — *AP*.

Gentle honour

A RETIRED Japanese diplomat will receive one of Israel's highest awards for saving 2,000 to 3,000 Jews from the Nazi holocaust, an official said yesterday in Tel Aviv. Mr Sempo Sugihara is to be honoured as a "righteous gentile" in a Tokyo ceremony today. — *Reuter*.

Space-bound

SENATOR Jake Garn, aged 52, was named yesterday as a crew member on a four-day US space shuttle flight. The shuttle *Challenger* is due to be launched on February 20 from Florida. A Frenchman and a woman were also named as members of the crew. — *Reuter*.

Schools protest

BLACK South African children yesterday stayed away from school in the Eastern Cape, *Patrick Laurence* writes from Johannesburg. Education officials were hopeful that the boycott would soon crumble in the troubled Vaal triangle area.

Aids discovery

US scientists have uncovered the genetic blueprints for the virus that causes Aids, the Washington Post reported yesterday. The discovery is expected to further efforts at detection, prevention and treatment of the disease. — *AP*.

Torture claims as police force
minority to change namesBulgarian
'attacks
on Turks
kill 40'

From Larry Gerber
in Sofia

The Bulgarian army and police forces have been urging a violent campaign to force ethnic Turks to take Bulgarian names, well-informed diplomatic sources said yesterday.

One source with direct access to predominantly Turkish areas said soldiers and police were surrounding villages at night, then going door to door passing out forms for residents to change their Turkish names to Bulgarian ones.

"If they do this, the problem is solved," he said. "If they refuse, they are threatened, and beaten. There are cases of rape and torture." His assertion could not be independently confirmed.

The source estimated that most ethnic Turks in southeastern Bulgaria had undergone the official name changes.

In all, he said, more than 100 people had been killed since the name campaign began two years ago, but said the drive had intensified to a "massive proportion" this month.

Most of the violence has taken place in villages near the cities of Kardjali, Plovdiv and Haskovo, but has also spread further north to the regions of Burgas, Shumen and Toluhin.

"It seems that they want to erase the remaining sign of the identity of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria," said one specialist.

Bulgaria has nearly a million ethnic Turks who make up about a tenth of the population and are the largest minority.

Many of them have lived here since the years when Ottoman Turks ruled Bulgaria, and there has been long-standing mistrust and animosity between the nationalities.

Communist authorities did away with Turkish community schools in the post-war years and, by 1974, Turkish-language instruction was all but abolished in all schools.

Turks also complain of economic and job discrimination and say the problems are compounded for anyone who practices Islamic. — *AP*.

Cyprus talks begin
on optimistic note

From Jane Rosen
in New York

President Kyprianou of Cyprus, leader of the Greek Cypriots, and Mr Rafi Denktash, leader of the self-declared Turkish Cypriot Republic, began their long-awaited talks yesterday at UN. It was the first time the two men had met in more than five years and as they shook hands, Mr Denktash said wryly, "the handshake of the century".

The two sides then retreated behind closed doors. Their meeting was expected to continue until Sunday.

The object of the talks, which are being held under Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar's auspices, is to conclude an agreement which will lead to the reunification of Cyprus as a republic.

Mr Perez de Cuellar conducted a series of indirect negotiations with the two sides, during which he offered various settlement proposals.

Howe plea prisoner
moved to icy cell

By Patrick Kralley
Diplomatic Correspondent

A Soviet political prisoner, whose cause was taken up by Sir Geoffrey Howe when Mr Mikhail Gorbachev visited Britain last month, has been moved to harsher conditions in his Tallinn prison.

Alexander Kholmiansky, a 28-year-old Moscow language teacher who has been held since last August, has now gone on a hunger strike. He was on holiday in Estonia when he was arrested by police for questioning and is still in an interrogation centre.

The Foreign Office in London confirmed last night that his case was one of a group of four, chosen as being representative of human rights violations, to be taken up with the senior Politburo member, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, during his week's visit to Britain just before Christmas.

In the discussion, which took place before the state luncheon at Hampton Court Palace, the Foreign Secretary had decided to take up specific examples, rather than making a "broad brush" reference to the situation.

Mr Kholmiansky has been moved to the zero cell — so called because the temperature never rises above freezing — according to friends who telephoned London yesterday.

He was already in solitary confinement, with no sheets or blankets and sleep limited to five hours per night, when Sir Geoffrey was briefed on his case in December. On January 3, less than a fortnight after Mr Gorbachev's departure from Britain, he was moved to the cell where he shares a single bed with a convicted criminal.

Drugs 'menace worsens'

Vienna: Illegal drug trafficking has hit record levels in many countries, and abuse now menaces almost the entire world, the International Narcotics Control Board said yesterday.

It said in its annual report that governments launched unparallelled law-enforcement drives against the threat last year.

But drug trafficking and abuse were now so pervasive that entire economies are disrupted, legal institutions menaced, and the security of some states threatened.

Bright itself is the fire control headquarters. Helicopters and light aircraft pass overhead, and fire engines roar in and out as one shift of fire fighters returns to the tents and another leaves.

A light cloud hangs over the town, such as is seen in the high Pyrenees on a rainy day,

Martens wins delay over cruise

From Derek Brown
in Brussels

A delay in deployment of US cruise missiles in Belgium is now almost certain following yesterday's promise by the Prime Minister, Mr Wilfried Martens, of a government decision by the end of March.

The first of Belgium's allocation of 48 missiles was due to arrive any day now, with deployment of the first flight of 16 from mid-March.

The Martens Government and Belgian public opinion are deeply divided on the cruise issue. The Christian Democrat coalition leader is thought now to be seeking a lengthy delay of deployment, ideally until after the general election, due before December 9.

Mr Martens's latest position, outlined on his return from talks with President Reagan in Washington, was a masterpiece of cunning evasion, even by the tortuous standards of Belgian politics.

His promise that deployment would go ahead will please the NATO allies and his rightwing liberal partners in government, but continuing procrastination about the timing of initial deployments is causing concern to the Allies.

They fear that if the Government avoids the issue much longer, it will encourage the similarly beleaguered Dutch Government to do the same. Worse, it would encourage the Soviet belief that European NATO members can be politically wrenched out of the hitherto solid NATO line.

American concern about continuing NATO solidarity stressed in the Washington talks and it was reflected yesterday in Mr Martens's pledge to consult the Allies on deployment timing.

Concerning the date of the beginning of deployment, the Government will hold consultations with its NATO allies in the first quarter of 1985, with the aim of agreeing with them a timetable for carrying out the NATO deployment strategy on its territory.

This timetable will be decided by the Government before the end of March, 1985, in agreement with the Allies, and will be submitted in Parliament, he said reporters.

Mr Martens said there was no longer any question of reviewing deployment policy itself. The issue was now the timing of such deployment.

While explicitly reserving final say on timing, the Prime Minister is banking heavily on the sympathy and patience of the other NATO governments. The other NATO governments, Mr Theo Fidelemaers, will soon make a comprehensive tour of the 15 NATO capitals to underline the delicacy and complexity of the Belgian position.

The Christian Democrat-Liberal coalition, already one of the longest lived of post-war governments here, desperately wants to delay the general election until the end of the year, when evidence of a long-awakened economic recovery might improve its chances.

A lack of
enthusiasm
for EEC

From our own
Correspondent in Brussels

BRITISH distaste for the EEC emerges clearly from the latest Community-funded opinion poll.

The survey puts Britain at or near the bottom of the league of enthusiasm for Europe. Only 33 per cent, for example, thought EEC membership had been beneficial. Other national responses ranged from 72 per cent in Italy, to 44 per cent in Denmark.

A more general question about whether membership is a good thing produced a 38 per cent to 33 per cent in favour. Only the Danes were less enthusiastic, with 33 per cent going for the "good thing" option.

Unsurprisingly, there was little joy in Britain for the pollsters from their question about the idea of an eventual "United States of Europe". Thirty-two per cent thought it a good idea, 48 per cent a bad idea. Again, the Danes were even more hostile, with only 12 per cent in favour.

In contrast, 69 per cent in Luxembourg favoured the idea, along with 64 per cent of Italians and 53 per cent of Greeks and French.

Meanwhile, the French extreme rightist leader, Mr Jean-Marie Le Pen, is threatening legal action against a European Parliament committee investigating the rise of racism and fascism in Europe.

Mr Le Pen is a Euro-MP, and as the leader of a neofascist group of French, Italian and Greek members, was entitled to a seat on the committee. Now he has withdrawn. He wrote this week to committee chairman, the British Labour MEP, Mr Glyn Ford, complaining that the inquiry was biased against his group.

Mr Le Pen, who won his seat after a nakedly racist campaign, says he will challenge the validity of the inquiry, which he claims to be unrepresentatively aimed against a constituent group of Parliament.

The strategy yesterday was to stop the fire in its tracks by creating a firebreak. It was carried through the forest by two bulldozers which had to mount a 900-ft hill with a gradient of about 1 in 2. They crashed their way up the slope, along the ridge, and down the steep incline the other side.

The crew climbed the hill and stationed themselves at intervals along the two-mile track left by the bulldozers. Then they began the burn-back, lighting the remaining scrub so that it would burn back towards the advancing fireline. If the plan works, the advancing fire will eventually burn itself out.

The crews are a ragtag of young and old, short and long hair, blue jeans and overalls. The section leaders (ie officers) wear khaki shirts and Forest Commission shoulder flashes. Most are bearded. The men are bound together by a strong language, a common understanding that fear can be overcome by comradeship, and the rationalization that someone has to do the job, so it might as well be them.

When a major fire breaks out, CFA and Forest Commission units are deployed from all over Victoria to contain it. Every community is proud of its brightly painted red CFA lorry, with the town's name painted in white on the side.

They are manned by volunteers for whom fire fighting is part of the ethos of manhood in the Australian bush. The

lories throb through the towns and hush roads with their red lights flashing, the volunteers riding on the back. The CFA's primary job is to protect human habitation, while the Forest Commission, manned by full time professionals versed in bushcraft, tackle the huge forest fires that cannot be contained with water hoses. The main responsibility of stopping the fire round Bright has fallen on the pros from the Forest's Commission.

Darkness fell before the burnback began, standing on top of the mountain ridge the advancing fire front was clearly visible as a flickering orange line, a mile or so away. "Pretty, isn't it?" said one of the fire fighters.

But the process has not yet begun, unless, that is, the fire is thinning down of forests in Lebanon, where the fire is controlled in the past year, including 200,000 people, including 80,000 Shiites whose growing resistance is the chief reason for the pull-back. The timing of the second and third stages will depend on what happens after the Israeli leaves Lebanon next month.

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Government seeks discussions on sweeping electoral reforms

Gandhi plans bill to ban political defections

From Ajay Bose in New Delhi

The Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, yesterday announced that the Government would introduce a bill in the current session of Parliament, which began this week, to ban defections from one political party to another.

Addressing a joint session of the two houses of Parliament, Mr. Singh said that the bill was being introduced to promote "a healthy public life."

He also said that the Government intended to initiate wide-ranging discussions with various political parties on electoral reforms.

Defections have long been the bane of Indian political life and, despite several attempts in the past to ban this practice, unscrupulous politicians have continued to change parties at their will, some of them having joined as many as five different parties in the past few years.

Moves to pass an anti-defection law were initiated nearly 30 years ago by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, but the move was shelved.

Most of the present national opposition parties, except the extreme rightwing Bharatiya Janata Party and the Communist parties, consist of defections from the Congress (I) Party.

When the Janata Party gained power in 1977, the Government introduced a bill against defections was revived, but once again was defeated by different factions of the party.

Under the Janata Party Government itself collapsed because of a series of defections from the Janata Party.

In the past few years, how-

ever, it has been the Congress (I) Party which has been responsible for organising defections to topple state governments.

In 1982, although Congress was defeated in Assembly elections in the north Indian states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, heavy bribes and ministerial posts were used to win over Opposition legislators and the party managed to form governments in both states.

In 1983, an attempt to buy over legislators in the Opposition-ruled south Indian state of Karnataka failed after one of them produced tape-recorded evidence of Congressmen offering him a heavy bribe.

Under the Congress party, Congress engineered a series of defections, first in Sikkim, then in the crucial border state of Kashmir, and finally in Andhra Pradesh, where the centrally-appointed governor ousted all rules and traditions to swear in a Government of defectors supported by Congress.

Although, Mr. Gandhi was reported to have been involved in some of the defections engaged in by Congress in the past year, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, he is believed to be serious about a law against defections for his own political benefit if for nothing else.

A law banning defections will not only enhance Mr. Gandhi's rapidly growing image of a principled and honest politician, but also help in keeping intact his big majority.

Police yesterday arrested two men suspected of shooting and wounding the Sikh high priest in Punjab, the Press Trust of India reported.



President Zail Singh (left) and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi arrive for a joint session of Parliament yesterday

Thais accuse US of leaving Kampuchea rebels powerless against Vietnam might

Bangkok: Thailand criticised the United States yesterday for not providing aid to the Kampuchean resistance coalition that has been battered in recent weeks by a powerful Vietnamese offensive along the Thai-Kampuchean border.

China meanwhile accused Vietnamese troops of crossing their common border, scene of sporadic clashes for many years, but Vietnam claimed to be observing a unilaterally declared ceasefire.

The Thai Foreign Minister, Mr. Siddhi Savetsila, told journalists that leading American newspapers were asking why Washington was not providing such assistance and added: "I'd like to ask the same question too."

Foreign Ministry officials, who asked not to be identified, said Thailand — regarded as a frontline pro-Western state facing a hostile Indo-China — was unhappy with Washington's reluctance as well as its failure to set forth "a clear-cut policy on South-east Asian affairs."

The US provides humanitarian aid but has sent no known military assistance to the coalition, which includes two non-Communist groups and the Communist Khmer Rouge.

Fighting appears to have intensified in recent days between the Vietnamese and Khmer Rouge, but has dropped off between the Vietnamese and other resistance elements elsewhere along the Thai frontier.

Khmer Rouge radio has claimed that guerrillas captured three Vietnamese positions in Kampuchea's north-western border province of Battambang on Monday, killing

107 Vietnamese soldiers and wounding more than 200. But Thai military sources noted that the Khmer Rouge had stepped up its attacks in Battambang over the past week, concentrating on Vietnamese positions along National Highway 5.

About 500 Khmer Rouge troops of the 474th Division burned bridges and attacked Vietnamese bases along the highway in six days of fighting.

The Thai Foreign Minister said during a press conference that he believed the American people already were withdrawing from the "Vietnamese syndrome."

A reference to America's reluctance to become deeply involved in South-east Asia after the trauma of the Vietnam war — implying that the US Government was not.

Mr. Siddhi's comments may have been timed to coincide with the visit here of Washington's top policymaker for East Asia, Mr. Paul Wolfowitz, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific. He is to discuss regional security.

In Peking, the official Xinhua news agency reported that China had repulsed eight Vietnamese attacks on two Chinese border positions on Wednesday. It made no mention of a unilateral Vietnamese ceasefire from midnight on Wednesday, cited in a Japanese news report from Hanoi.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, asked whether the Vietnamese had begun a lunar new year ceasefire in the border conflict, said only: "I take your question." China earlier had rejected truce proposals — AP.

Philippines drop charges against exile

Manila: The Government dropped charges of subversion against the opposition leader, Mr. Benigno Aquino, before his scheduled return from nearly four years of voluntary exile in the US.

President Ferdinand Marcos had ordered a review of the charges last Tuesday, saying he wanted to enable Mr. Salonga, often mentioned as a possible presidential candidate, "to pursue his political aspirations to the full."

Also yesterday, the Labour Minister, Mr. Blas Ople, said he

believed some American officials wanted to help the opposition, and warned the US against intervening in Philippine affairs.

Opposition leaders have said they feared Mr. Salonga would be arrested or killed upon his arrival next Monday.

The State Prosecutor, Mr. Sergio Apostol, said he had filed the necessary dismissal motion on instruction from President Marcos, before Judge Rodolfo Ortiz, who has been conducting the trial of 20 of Mr. Salonga's co-accused since

1982. A spokesman for the Justice Minister, Mr. Estelito Mendoza said the case against them was also being reviewed.

The charges, which carry a maximum penalty of death, arose from a series of terrorist bombings that killed one person and injured nearly 100 others in 1980. The military said the bombings were part of an opposition plot to overthrow the Government by assassinating Mr. Marcos and other officials.

A total of 79 people, including the murdered opposition leader, Mr. Benigno Aquino, and other prominent Filipino opposition figures in self-exile in the US, were named in the case, but only 20 were arrested and put on trial.

Mr. Mendoza said the charges against Mr. Salonga were being dropped because the man who implicated him in the alleged plot — a naturalised American of Filipino descent, Victor Burns Lovely — was now back in the US and "has ceased to be available as a witness."

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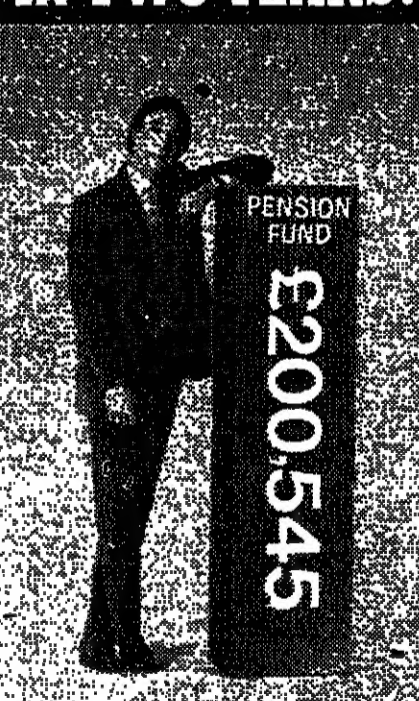
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N. Koreans call off trade talks

Tokyo: North Korea has called off trade talks with South Korea, and said that the rescheduling of the discussions would depend entirely on Seoul's attitude.

In Seoul, the National Unification Minister, Mr. Sohn Ja-shik, called for a resumption of yesterday's postponed dialogue with Pyongyang and repeated Seoul's proposal for a summit meeting soon between the South's President Chun Doo Hwan and the North's President Kim Il-sung.

Pyongyang said last week that trade and Red Cross talks could not be held because planned US-South Korean military exercises due to start on February 1 were provocative.

The North Korean Vice-Premier, Mr. Kim Hwan, said that a second round of North-South economic talks "depends entirely on the South Korean side's attitude."

The exchanges, called Team Spirit 1985, involve more than 200,000 US and South Korean troops and will last from February 1 to mid-April.

Five people were crushed to death in Seoul yesterday, and 15 injured, in a stampede by more than 1,000 people rushing for seats at a political rally. Police said the victims were trampled while trying to enter a 300-seat auditorium in the south-eastern city of Andong.—Reuter.

Taiwanese spymaster arrested

TAIPEI: The former head of Taiwan's military intelligence bureau has been taken into military custody for questioning in a scandal that has linked officers of the agency to the murder of a Chinese-American journalist in the United States, a government official said yesterday.

Vice Admiral Wong Shi-Lin, director of the bureau since 1983, was dismissed without explanation by the Government on Tuesday, when it was announced that one of his deputies had been arrested for alleged involvement in the assassination of a political writer, Henry Liu, aged 52, who had written articles critical of the Nationalist Chinese Government in Taiwan. He was reported to have been revising a critical biography of Taiwan's President Chiang Ching-kuo shortly before his death.

Government sources said that President Chiang reportedly furiously about the alleged involvement of military intelligence officials, personally ordered a special committee to "spare no effort to find the truth and punish those responsible, no matter what their rank."

China is closely monitoring the case, the Peking Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

Mitterrand faces Noumea protests

Noumea: The Mayor, Mr. Roger Laroque, last night called for mass demonstrations by New Caledonia's 50,000 white settlers to show they wanted to keep the troubled territory French.

Mr. Laroque told the municipal council of the planned demonstrations as the French President, Mr. Mitterrand, prepared to make the one-day visit on Saturday.

Ethnic violence in the territory has killed 19 people in two months.

"I want no hostility. I only want the people to show their determination to stay French," Mr. Laroque said.

About 30,000 people rallied here when Mr. Laroque called for a gesture of defiance against a visiting French minister in May, 1983.

France's chief envoy, Mr

Edgard Pisani, yesterday met the leader of Melanesian militants demanding independence. No details were disclosed of his hour-long talk with Ms. Jean-Marie Tjibaou, head of the "provisional government" of Kanak militants.

Mr. Pisani has proposed a referendum in July on whether the territory should become independent next January.

Kanak and white settlers both indicated yesterday that Mr. Mitterrand would receive a hostile reception.

In Paris, Mr. Guy Claissé, editor of the left-wing newspaper Le Matin, said New Caledonia could turn into a "mortal trap" for Mr. Mitterrand just at the point when he hopes to rebuild his shattered popularity.

Broken dreams, page 15

Poison gang ends truce

Osaka: Japan's poison sweet gang has struck again after ending a year truce.

Police said yesterday that they had found lethal doses of sodium cyanide in two packets of sweets left in an envelope outside the Osaka headquarters of the Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper.

Attached to the envelope was a note saying: "Poison. Dangerous. You will die if you eat what is in here." It was

signed with the gang's usual name, "The Man with 21 Faces," a reference to a 1930s mystery novel. The envelope also contained letters from the gang addressed to the Yomiuri and three other newspapers.

The gang said it intended to extract a \$5 million ransom from food companies this year.

Last year, the gang planted cyanide-laced sweet packets on shop shelves, causing Morinaga sales to plummet.—Reuter.

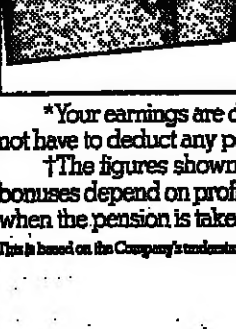
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Mozambique to get \$1m military aid from Reagan

Ataka, the aid programme is the latest evidence of the change in US-Mozambique relations. Over the past year, the two countries exchanged ambassadors and opened a cultural exchange programme. In 1984, Mozambique received more US emergency food aid than any other African country, and the

Washington: President Reagan has asked Moscow to "provide" a "full and complete account" of the fate of Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat seized by Russian soldiers in 1945, after he saved thousands of Jews from death in Nazi extermination camps.

"In the depths of the horrors of the second world war we would not want to see one shining light of inspiration, and holding the honor of the

human race," Mr. Reagan said in a written statement.

Mr. Wallenberg, assigned to Sweden's delegation in Budapest, "pulled people out of death marches, boarded deportations trains, and saved Jewish papers to thousands of innocent people on the way to death camps," the statement said.

Mr. Wallenberg was taken by Russian soldiers on January 17, 1945.

From Clive Sanger

The special party convention that has been called by the Premier of Quebec, Mr. René Lévesque, this week may well signal the end of the political road for a remarkable politician.

Mr. Lévesque is trying to change dramatically the course of the Parti Québécois, which he founded in 1968 as his instrument for taking Quebec and its six million people out of the Canadian federation.

He is convinced that his party will lose badly to the Liberals in the next election, due within a year, if it fails to change its youth full-front

independence, and he seems to have persuaded that he could do business with the Conservative Prime Minister, Mr. Brian Mulroney as he was unable to do with Pierre Trudeau.

So, while it would be silly to call Mr. Levesque a "born again federalist," he is interested in putting separatism on ice for the rest of his political career.

He called this special party convention in Montreal to wipe out a controversial resolution passed at the regular party convention last June. This declared that in the next provincial election a vote for the party would be taken as a vote

This was much less ambiguous than the phrase "independence" used in the 1980 referendum. When voters were asked to approve the opening of negotiations with Ottawa Quebec had to become politically sovereign while enjoining the form of close economic association.

They were promised they would be consulted again before any substantial step was taken, but even with those assurances the vast majority of voters rejected the proposal to start such talks. Mr Levesque then won the 1981 election by promising that the issue of independence would not be raised during the next Parliament.

Most commentators believe that the separatist vote has never risen above 25 per cent, but half of the old Levesque Cabinet refused to accept this in November, when Mr Levesque showed himself determined to hold the special convention seven ministers led by the Finance Minister, Mr Jacques Parizeau, resigned.

The strain of this Cabinet crisis, and other events including the resignation of the leader of the National Assembly by an army corporal who shot and killed three people, has exhausted Mr Levesque.

He returned from a bolt-hole in the mountains of Quebec within two days, had come into

He passed the tests and gamely told journalists that he intended to stay in his rival's long enough. "I will not let Trudeau did, to collect his old age pension. At 62 he has three years to go, but then curtains are likely to close on him after tomorrow's convention."

From the declared views of the 1,500 delegates at the time, their constituencies selected them for the convention, there is little doubt that he will win a majority to expand the constitution. But he will also carry the odium of the orthodox Quebec separatists.

From Mike Reid
in Lima

The graves were found in an anonymous tip-off to state attorneys in Ayacucho, 35 miles south-east of Lima. On the grave, close to the town of Huanta, close to the town of El Eden, including the bodies of several children, were found the village of Huancabamba. The victims had been blindfolded and their hands were tied. All apparently were

The discovery of more graves is an embarrassment for the Government of President Fernando Belaunde.

When 50 bodies were discovered near Huanta last August, armed forces chiefs said the grave contained guerrillas killed in action and buried by the army. But the military's new-general's office has since opened charges of murder against the head of the military unit based in Huanta.

The security forces are accused by the human rights groups of being responsible for the disappearance of more than 10,000 civilians in the past two years in the area.

From our Correspondent

President Reagan's record on civil rights was described as "most memorable" by the president of the National Urban League, Mr. John Jacob. He urged the President to take "a handful of small steps that could begin to heal the breach between his Administration and black people."

The league, an established black civil rights group, has distributed in its recent reports the condition of black Americans as grim. But "It sees some signs of hope."

Among steps recommended in the report were presidential support for a civil rights bill now before Congress, reappraisal of US policy towards South Africa, and a moratorium on budget cuts in programmes that help the poor. Mr Jacob also urged President Reagan to meet leaders of the black community.

The release of the report and Mr Jacob's comments came a day after Mr Reagan met a small group of black business executives and representatives of grass roots organisations to discuss a possible agenda for black progress through self-help rather than government aid.

Mr Jacob said there was more of an attitude of self-reliance among blacks — a new emphasis on defining their own problems and devising their own solutions. But the Government, public and the private sector fully involved, the cycle of pain and poverty would not be broken.

By Jonathan Steele

Senador's three main trade union organisations have organised a march on Parliament next week after a two-day general strike ended with six dead and hundreds injured. The demonstrations, against rises in bus fares and fuel prices, are the most vigorous protests since the lightning Government of Mr Leon Febrés Cordero took power in August.

Mr Febrés Cordero, who campaigned with promises to curtail land reform and run the economy on a free market, has been criticised for the price rises were needed to cut the projected budget deficit by a third.

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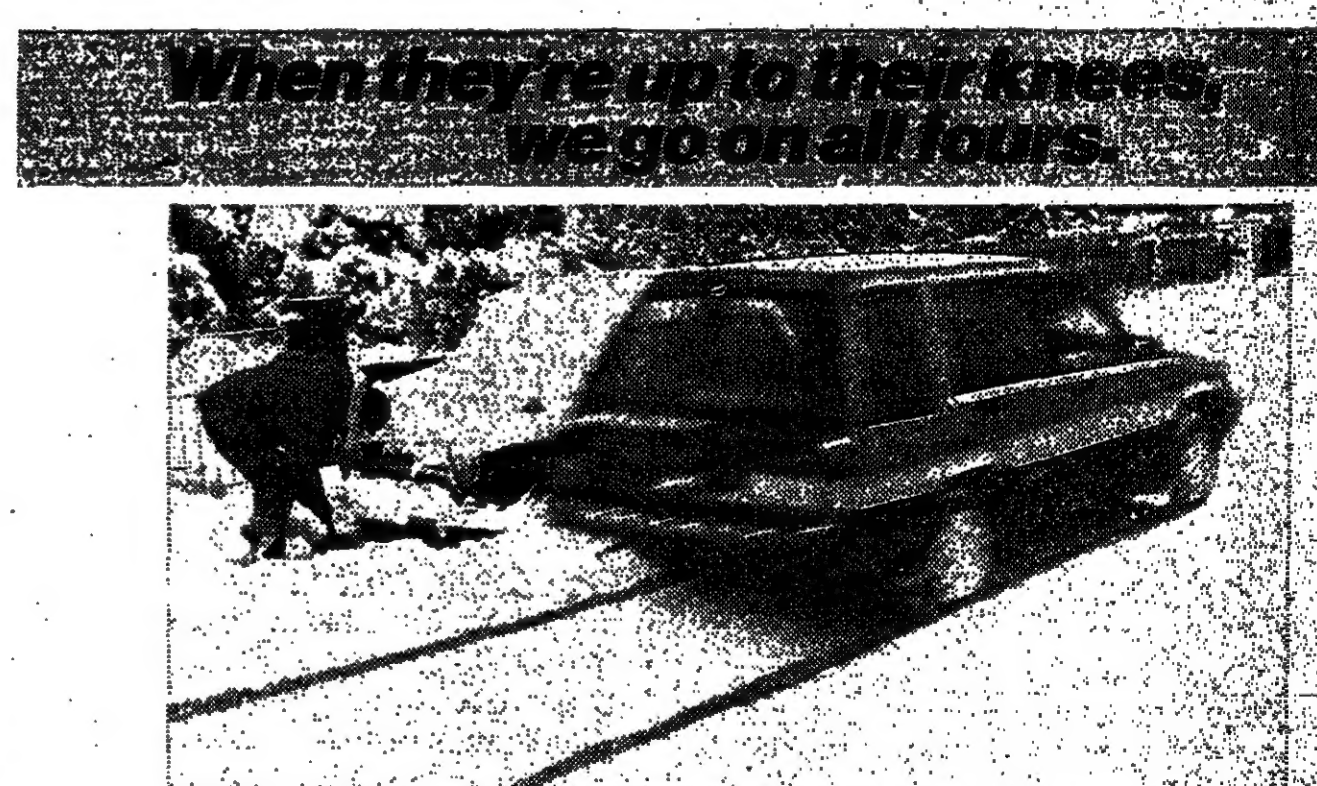
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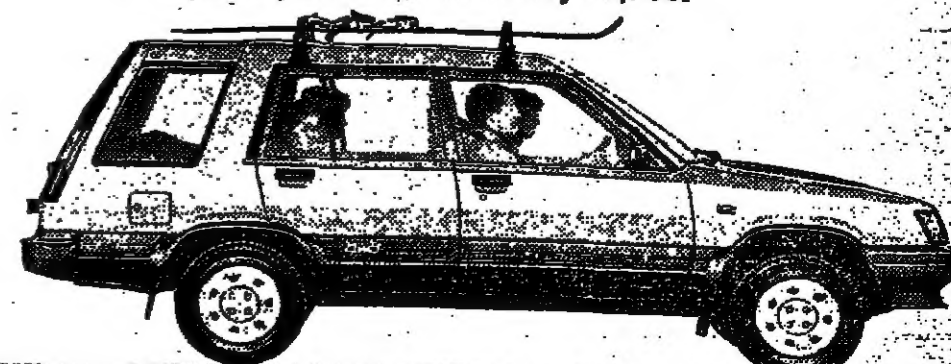
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FILM festivals in India are invariably controversial, argumentative affairs about which it is generally assumed that no good can be written without twice the weight of bad. The mistrust of authority in India is such that the benefit of doubt is seldom accorded. Someone, somewhere has cheated, done favours or been just plain stupid. The Delhi festival this year has proved no exception to that rule.

It started off on quite the wrong foot by introducing on stage not only a fairly distinguished jury, headed by Jeanne Moreau, but also a huge assemblage of Bombay movie stars, each more fat and succulent-looking than one before, while some of India's most distinguished directors were left fuming in their seats.

That was not a very good idea. Nor was it very astute to put the 21-film Panorama of new Indian films into a cinema whose quality of projection had clearly not been checked beforehand, and which made a foggy mockery of the very movies which the National Film Development Corporation of India had painstakingly financed. Since the festival is an offshoot of that organisation, it seemed much like cutting off one's nose to spite one's face.

The truth is that Delhi is not a film city, like Bombay or Madras. It is the home of the bureaucracy, and on these occasions it shows. Nor have the international films been particularly well chosen. Neil Jordan's *The Company Of Wolves*, for example, was brought over but not screened officially, and of the 20 or so Third World films shown at the National Film Festival, only a few have been accorded screenings.

That seems a dereliction of duty by a festival that prides itself on leading the Third World, though one does have to admit that there were good Latin-American and black

A scene from Adoor Gopalakrishnan's *Face To Face*

Derek Malcolm reports on an outstanding new feature by the director of *Rat Trap* at the Indian Film Festival in New Delhi

The god who was found wanting

American cinema retrospectives and tributes too to Visconti and Imamura.

The Indian Panorama, however, did elicit some interesting new work. The best seemed to me to be Adoor Gopalakrishnan's *Mukhamukham Face To Face*. Gopalakrishnan, who comes from Trivandrum in the south, has now made four films, the third of which, *Rat Trap*, won the British Film Institute's award, given annually for the "most original and imaginative" new film shown at the National Film Theatre during its course.

Those who doubt the usefulness of that award can rest assured that it helped Gopalakrishnan tremendously, and *Face To Face* has now become one of the talking points of the festival.

It has, like all his films, a highly refined and personal style which has confused many, since it is specifically about the highly important split in the Indian Communist Party in 1964.

The split was reflected all over the world and was fought out with particular intensity in Kerala, where the film is set and where the CP was voted into power in 1964. Every detail of the film, on the political level at least, is said to be accurate. But in fact this is the story of a fictional leader who suddenly begins to feel that he has nothing more to offer.

He starts to have stomach cramps and to drink, and finally withdraws completely from his former life, refusing to speak even to his closest

political associates and falling frequently into deep sleep. The point of the film is not that he is a disillusioned communist, though he may be, but that he simply wishes as a man, to stop. And the second point Gopalakrishnan makes is that his supporters cannot accept it. The need for leaders sometimes overrides the impossibility of leadership. Someone has to be made god-like, even if he isn't.

The film is not only a deeply personal statement but an intensely introspective one. It has of course been seen as some sort of indirect criticism of the CP, though it is nothing of the sort. What is so impressive about it is not only its original subject matter but the fastidious style with

which it is made. Nothing else matches up to this, but Ketan Mehta's *Holi* (Festival Of Bengal) was an entrant from Bengal of more than usual interest — an Indian attempt at a youth movie that tries for much more than the expected.

The students at an Indian College want a holiday during the spring festival of Holi, and consider strike action. But everything goes wrong with their plans, and the putative revolt turns sour. That is the story. But what is impressive about the film is its sometimes over-elaborate technical construction and the way it refuses to go the obvious way.

The students are presented not as idealists reacting against a repressive and

hypocritical educational establishment but as young people who have gone beyond that into a kind of devil-may-care anarchy on the one hand, and a determination to make money on the other.

There are thus many analogies to the situation in the West, and the film, with its gaunt, queer-bashing finale, pushes you first one way and then the other, for and against its young protagonists. Mehta, whose first feature was the much-liked *Bhuvan Shasti*, is clearly a director to reckon with.

So is Govind Nihalani, whose new film, *Party*, was also taken, like the student film, from a play by the Marathi writer Mahesh Elkunchwar. Nihalani, a former cinematographer for



Shyam Benegal, is now one of the most successful exponents of the so-called middle-class Indian cinema, in which directors try to reach out to the public without making too many compromises.

This middle way has its dangers — Saeed Mirza's *Mohan Joshi Hazir Ho* (A Summons For Johan Joshi) was a swipe at the Indian legal system cast in the mould of a Carry On film, and thus not successful on either the level of art or commerce. But it does seem worth pursuing, since Nihalani's *Half-Truth* not only made money but justifiably attacked the arm of the law.

Party, however, betrays its theatrical origins more than *Half-Truth* does. It is a celebratory party given for a literary figure in Bombay by an assortment of friends, pseudo and otherwise. In the world outside, a poet-cum-revolutionary is struggling with real life while the revellers gyrate around each other like effete gadflies.

The film is well acted and directed but in the end has some of the same pretensions it is attacking. Middle-class cinema perhaps, but determinedly middlebrow too.

Not many other among the Panorama films may surface in Europe, apart from Kumar Shahani's *Wages And Profit*, an interesting attempt to subvert the familiar Indian epic form; Goutam Ghose's *The Crossing*, which is ready to get a prize or two at Venice; and Buddhadeb Dasgupta's *Blind Alley*, a moving if flawed finale to his trilogy about Bengal life.

But one would quite like to see what Nihalani made of another Bengali film, *Saraj De's Kony*, a kind of Indian *Chariots of Fire* in which a young swimmer from the slums is coached into prominence in spite of fearful prejudice from the establishment. *Chariots of Water*, in fact.

Vai Arnold-Forster on the radio week

Ring of success

WHATEVER the truth of the adage No News is Good News, radio is full of tales of genial optimism. Not so much on the news front (remember that ill-fated Radio 3 series which tried to disprove that adage and became a compendium of ear-splitting little snippets of minor technological advance?) but in the many interviews and documentaries which tell of business, medical or personal success.

Some are stories of instant conversion, like Ken Lancaster, featured in the recent *I'm Sorry, God!* (Radio 4, a former East End burglar and thug, who had been a determined hater of his fellow human beings but who took to Christianity and changed his ways. A pity, really, that the interviewer Chris Stuart didn't take the opportunity of asking the classic question: "Have you stopped beating your wife?" But Mr Lancaster had, and his wife was there to confirm it).

This week there was a *Worldwide Portrait* in Black And White (Radio 4, Tuesday) in which the interviewer Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones went to the wedding of Glenis, a white girl, and Joe, a black man, who had been at first not too pleased about Joe's colour.

"She liked Joe," said Glenis. "I don't really think it's me mum's own personal feelings, I think she's worried about the colour of her neighbours will say, and the family." But Glenis and Joe were in love. "My parents did not bring me up to be prejudiced," she said. "They both got social consciences." Joe's mum, a second wife to Joe's dad, said: "It would be nice if every race stuck to their own race, but that's not our intention, so long as you're happy."

And happy they obviously were, when we met them at their church wedding, which was a lovely and very unobjectionable party where the two mums chatted away in the friendliest fashion. Joe worked in the probation service. Glenis is educational welfare, and they sound like a very well-matched couple. It would be nice if there were any more tensions ahead, they would deal with them successfully.

An under-rated, skilful little programme, edited by the producer, Frances Atkinson, so that you had a sense of the people, with a squalling, the rustle of wedding dress, and the traditional, embarrassing wedding speech; the matches of comment and greetings provided an even stronger sense of the attitudes and characters of the people. I suspect it told us more (and certainly more realistically and warmly) about relationships between black and white than many a fervent and well-argued studio discussion. I'm glad that Glenis and Joe let us listen.

Conversation, though not necessarily a pastime, is mind again when I heard Jimmy Reid talking to the Rt Hon. Edward Heath. Mr Reid sounded so admiring of the old Tory Party; Mr Heath joined him in condemning the "new" Labour, prising in view of what both men are saying these days: but was this really an ex-Conservative Prime Minister? It sounded more like an SNP recruiting interview.

Not that creepy interview, as confined to "news" and politics. Gerald Williams, a knowledgeable commentator on lawn tennis, is chatting up well-known persons from the sporting world. In a *Worldwide Portrait* (Radio 4, 2 Sunday and Wednesdays), George Best, a few days before his incarceration, was the first in the series. Mr Williams sounded both patronising and apparently somewhat ignorant of alcoholism. Mr Best wasn't answered with candour and some dignity.

This week Mr Williams tackled Terry Lawless, the boxing manager. Since I know nothing of boxing, I quote Mr Williams: "Terry Lawless tells a fascinating inside story of the fight game, answers those who seek to ban it, and comments on allegations that he is involved with a secret syndicate in which he profits at his boxers' expense."

It sounded somewhat dubious, highly complicated and rather more Roger Cook's territory. And I said that this interview made it any clearer. The boxer Charlie Magri, we were told, reckoned he'd been misquoted but Mr Williams said: "Charlie's used to being interviewed by the sporting press, to suddenly be interviewed by an investigative journalist, that's a new experience in which he really loaded... you're not talking about a man that really understands these things."

Mr Williams certainly sounded more at home with Mr Lawless, though we didn't get very far inside the fight game, and the arguments for banning boxing were hardly exercised at all. There was one relative exchange when Mr Williams talked of how he helped "his boys" to get away from poverty and crime. "You see, yourself being fatter to kids from an underprivileged section of society," commented Mr Williams appreciatively. Ah!

Rats come out to play

Robin Denselow on Bob Geldof's latest album and the other rock releases

BOB GELDOLF was once best known as leader of a group called The Boomtown Rats, but now of course, he's a celebrity for his quite remarkable work in raising millions for Ethiopia through the Band Aid record. This week he returned from Ethiopia to find Do They Know It's Christmas had broken into the American top ten, while continuing to prove popular here.

Geldof now has another record he needs to promote, which might prove more of a commercial struggle. His own band have not been wildly successful in recent years, but The Boomtown Rats in the *Long Grass* (Phonogram) could, with a little luck and

the help of a badly-needed hit single, put them back in favour. Geldof can be a good song-writer, as he showed with *Rate Mondays*, as well as the Band Aid song (which sold not merely because of all the super stars on it), and there are some good songs hidden behind the brass, crashing production work here.

The Rats' last album, *V Deep*, released three years ago, was patchy, experimental, and a commercial flop. The new LP starts with the new single, *A Hold Of Me*, which sets the tone with its clanking synths, followed by a solid chugging rhythm and almost a wall-of-sound production, behind Geldof's cry

of defiance against unnamed oppressors.

Several of the songs that follow are even better, though Geldof slips into a Bowie-like croon at times, as on the perky *Over Again* and *Another Sad Story*.

Elsewhere there's a brassy, jazzy riff to the dance piece *Tonight*, a touch of Springsteen's exhilaration to the excellent *Hard Times*, and a touch of Sixties pop in the cheerful but crashing *An Icicle In The Sun*. It is (as they used to say) an album that grows on you, and I hope it keeps the Rats in business. After his efforts of the past few weeks, Geldof certainly deserves it.

Akimbé: Akimbé (Forward Sounds). A varied, theatrical, cut-price debut from a duo that consists of a powerful black singer known as Deb'borá, who was brought up in the Bronx and worked in theatre in San Francisco, and white Mancunian instrumentalist Andy Wilson. They've obviously had considerable experience playing at alternative cabaret or political shows, for their songs are a strong, quick blend of blues, African percussion or rap that sound as if they'd been even more effective live. Deb'borá's theatrical talk-over, declamatory style is most effective on *Waiting*, and she sings strongly at the unaccompanied start of

Mother Seacole, the story of a never-recognised Jamaican nursing heroine of the Crimean war, that turns into a celebration as Andy's keyboards and guitar are mixed in.

George Benson: 30/20 (Warners). Back in the early Sixties, Benson was an excellent jazz guitarist who worked with the likes of Brother Jack McDuff and then Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock. His tragedy is that he is cursed with a wonderful, smooth and relaxed voice, and since recording the cool and classy jazz-soul "cross-over" album *Breedin'* in the early Seventies, he's played less and less guitar,

sung more and more, and gradually become very rich and very predictable.

To be fair, this record is not that bad, but it is very dull for (unlike the jazz music Benson now takes) it has no real character. There are lush, synthesised rhythmic pieces, and lush synthesised ballads, all treated with classy, relaxed vocals.

Hank Williams Jr.: Are You Sure Hank Done It This Way (Warners). Like Julian Lennon, Randall Hank Williams had the problem of following in the footsteps of a legendary father, and like Julian (so far, at least) he has managed, remarkably well, despite almost killing

himself in a climbing accident ten years ago.

This 10-track album is a good, rousing country-rock, but it's a pity that only half the songs are as good as the original Hank Williams. He is mentioned in half the songs on the first side (including those by Wayne Jennings and Kris Kristofferson), while in his own songs, Williams Jr. stresses the family tradition just a little too often. The younger Williams's style is influenced by Charlie Daniels and bands like Marshall Tucker and the Allmans, and he has a good, driving, heavy country version of his father's favourite, *Like Ronky Tonkin*.

TELEVISION

Nancy Banks-Smith

The Mistress

YOU CAN quite see why Felicity Kendal was chosen to take the curse of *The Mistress* (BBC-2), a new comedy series by Carla Lane. It's the wholesomeness, she can't help it. Buttons could take her course in tentativeness. She is all bubble-gum and soft as Cole Porter remarked appreciatively, Mickey Mouse.

She reminds me of those little girls who sit opposite you on the Tube, looking like Julian Glavin. You set fire to their little cotton socks, but they wouldn't melt in their mouths. "I'll have one of those," you think mistily and that's when you discover your mistake.

In danger of straining something to prove this mistress is a pure puppet, Carla Lane gives her a flower shop somewhere jolly bosky and a little girl's menagerie of house-trained rabbit and silver Shred coloured cat. Little girls do have peculiar power over cats until, according to a vet I know, puberty. "They bring in these great slavering, suppurating beasts, cutting curses. They just say 'Who's a big silly' and the thing rolls over on its back and starts purring."

I neverthless drew in my breath at his earnest when Miss Kendal actually kissed her cat. This conduct seemed to me to verge on the territory of Madeline Bassett, the premier pig in English literature and the second in Bertie Wooster. The Woman That God Forgot.

Fortunately Jane Asher, exquisitely cool and slim as the Norse god, scored a magnificent own goal by loading a dishwasher wearing rubber gloves—then insisting on handcream.

The archetypally awful wife in *The Mistress* is one, Nancy. When love was all, Nancy used to wait in the hall with a little pink thing on "but now she's about as soft and gentle as rabies." It is typical of the care showered on this series that as Felicity Kendal waits for her lover, puzzling the while over the fondle of her rabbits, she is indeed wearing a little pink off-one-shoulder thing.

It bubbles along brightly but now and then there are lines which seem to belong to someone rather less girlish, somewhat curlier at the corners: "Oh, God!" "No good calling God. He's out a lot."

Unintentionally sober, tolling note sounded in Peter Bowles's voice when he described in *Talking Proper* (Forty Minutes, BBC-2) how he lost his regional accent at drama school. Or how it was forced by him to leave him.

I had to work very hard on the Nottingham accent but the world was changing. If an actor is moving the audience vowel sounds don't matter much. There were a number of actors with the strength of character to retain their accents. Albert Finney kept his identity. I found the backbone of my identity had been interfered with. I was acting a role in life too, and this caused a weakness of power and confidence in performing at first.

Bowles's accent, like Eliza Doolittle's, is better than the real thing. Now I come to think of it, his career has been built on characters who are slightly spurious, faintly foreign. In a word which was written on a blackboard during a meeting of The Queen's English Society, he comes across as "Suezo."

I perfectly sympathise: I too was closeted (in a closet) at school and made to recite, "It was eight bells ringing and the morning watch was done. And the gunners' lads were singing as they polished every gun" until I was fit to mingle. I think I could live cheerfully enough without the backbone of my identity if only I could forget that bloody awful poem by bloody Newbolt I shouldn't bloody wonder.

BARBICAN/RADIO 3

Hugo Cole

Hymnen

THE FIRST British performance of Hymnen in its fullest version brought

together the BBC Orchestra under Eotvos (in part three) four young soloists including Markus and Simon Stockhausen in parts one, two and four, with the original quadrophonic tape. More than two hours long, the work benefits hugely from the greater variety of sounds and higher tension generated by the presence of a live orchestra and the expansion of the musical apparatus to a scale that matches the grandeur of the whole conception.

The projection of Stockhausen's vision of a better world in which the national anthems of many nations meet in a sort of musical accord.

This is to stretch the word accord to its limits. In the third (orchestral) register, tape sometimes seems to voice ribald comments on the orchestra's most serious utterances, and vice versa when the tape starts up with the American anthem. There is also an element of burlesque in the Ives-like melody in which fragments of the anthems are thrown around, in massed-choir versions or crude and brassy orchestration, while live soloists elegantly pick out a phrase here and there.

More often, the anthems are deflected and re-composed so far that we no longer recognise sources. The starting of the fourth chord, based on the final chord of the Swiss anthem consists of a huge adagio as sombre as *Sibelius* with its slow moving harmonies, and pulsating, ostination.

The BBC orchestra played, with great concentration and even eloquence — all the greater because Stockhausen gives them many definite and striking musical gestures and orchestrates, even in the conventional sense, with so much assurance.

Markus's trumpet part was, in fact, a good deal less essential to the music than that of the BBC's excellent first trumpet (Gareth Bimson) in region three. They do however provide the necessary focus for attention in the great final climax, where all four retreat behind a huge tamtam to beat it furiously, perhaps representing humanity besieged in a threatening world. Whatever the intention, the whole of this region reaffirms Stockhausen's stature as spell binder.

SADLER'S WELLS

Naseem Khan

Wind In

The Willows

IN THE past *Wind In The Willows*, in A.A. Milne's perennial Toad Of Toad Hall version, has been rather like



Melvyn Hayes, Terry Scott, Donald Hewlett and Patrick Cargill. Sadler's Wells. Picture by Douglas Jeffery

birthdays, something more to look forward to than actually to enjoy. Somewhere beneath the old-fashioned fustian the book gleamed, but insubstantial and passing. Now it is out of copyright and fair game for all. Happily this will mean many stabs at this evocative book, for Willis Hall's new view of the river bank sadly offers much the same features as before.

It is of course charmingly done, from Rat's first appearance rowing his HMS Rodent down Finlay James's lyrical green river to the grand finale in Toad Hall and the walloping of the weasels and ferrets and stoats. Few hearts could remain unmoved by the precocious Toad (Terry Scott) off, poop-poop, in his purloined motor, or homely Mole (Melvyn Hayes) and mainly Rat (Patrick Cargill). Willis Hall follows the book as closely as A.A. Milne did, with many of the same omissions — for example, Mole's poignant return to his dusty little home, with its cockleshell-edged garden and statue of Garibaldi. The high spots will still delight unspoiled adults. The music by Denis King is jolly and likeable and forgettable.

But someone some day, and I only hope I live to see it, will take this lovely book by the scruff of the neck and shake out a theatrical version that gets far closer to the spirit of the original than either this or the Milne version manages. If the Royal Shakespeare Company can do it for Peter Pan, then there's surely hope yet.

BLOOMSBURY

John Fordham

Moire Music

TREVOR WATTS's *Moire Music*, the Hill Street Blues of modern improvisation in which a jostling collection of musical events incessantly barge into each other and imbue an entire anthology of little stories, resolved and unresolved, with seething life, is now on tour in Britain.

Its opening concert on the Contemporary Music Network, mixed the virtues of the imaginative virtuosos (an untutored parallel development of the cyclical constructions of Glass and Reich, rich collective soloing from the likes of Watts, Simon Picard and Lol Coxhill) with the not unfamiliar drawbacks of hyperactive percussion, too much exposure of simple themes not always gathered by the multi-layering effect of play ing them out of phase, and lack of dynamic variety.

The band sports four saxophones, two violins, bass, two drummers and piano. The result is, therefore, a somewhat spindly, top-end sound, and what spindly, top-end sound, the harshness of which has in the past been softened by Watts's use of vocalists, absent on this tour. It began with Tuesday Piece, an open, medium tempo tune mostly played in unison by the

horns with the bulk of the variations being based on the busy, bristling intersection between saxophone and piano. Then Genocky and conga player Nana Talbot. Genocky played with a crisp and effortless energy, resolving phrases on swishing symbol patterns.

The music shifted imperceptibly into an ascending five-note pattern (Watts is ingenious at devising means by which improvisational frameworks develop without fuss) over which Simon Picard slipped a gravely tenor note. Watts at this stage was finding it harder to connect. Genocky began playing with such furious intensity that the saxophonist was forced, like a cornered animal, into squealing desperately for space.

Some of the subsequent ensemble playing caught the bright, effervescent sound that this band has built a reputation on — the second piece, because performed in much looser rhythm, with its theme an exchange of mercurial soprano and violin phrases, set them soaring. It shortly became earthbound again during Lol Coxhill's first solo, wriggling over a fractured and bruising orchestral section that sounded like two completely unrelated marching bands colliding at an intersection. The upshot though — a passage of Coltrane-like horn laments — was delicious.

THE PLACE

Kenneth Rex

Thomas

Leabhart

HOW I WAS Perplexed And What I Did About It, by the American mime Thomas Leabhart, begins with the artist demonstrating some Decroux-style movements, only to be interrupted by a voice-over suggestion that he should put on a costume ("You don't expect the audience to look at a leotard for an hour, do you?") and show a few slides.

From this witty opening, Leabhart launches into an autobiographical monologue, while performing a series of extraordinary routines. But perplexity sets in when these movements don't seem to have anything to do with the narrative. In one section he set with an agile response to the surging nationalism of the opening *Molto allegro*, the sinuous lyricism of the *Andante* and the relentless agitation of the finale's insistent triplet motif.

And in Bartok's predominantly reflective characteristically tough, No. 2 quartet they gave a mature survey of the composer's stark, crazy panoramas.

PURCELL ROOM

Hugh Canning

Roth Quartet

ODALINE de la Martinière, the Cuban-born conductor, has carved a niche for herself and her Ensemble L'Intégrité on the British contemporary music scene. Her wide-ranging and radical programming, her creative gifts are considerably less familiar, though, so the young Roth Quartet's commissioning, with funds from the Arts Council, and performance of her first string quartet proved an intriguing, if not altogether invigorating, experience.

In her note, Ms Martinière outlined the problem posed by the weight of a long European tradition. She follows the established path or strike out on her own? Confidently, she affirms that her "own person" triumphed in the end. But it did. Whatever individually the first movement might have contained was soon alloyed by repetitive use of material. Bartok meets the minimalists.

Nor did the backward-looking, slow movements, the second distinguished by arching arpeggiated lines and the fourth by a recurrent bluesy chorale, suggest a triumph of heroic proportions over second Viennese School models. Still, her quartet is an attractive and eminently accessible piece, which the Roths played with commitment.

The players showed their qualities, too, in Mendelssohn's lovely D major quartet of the Opus 44 set with an agile response to the surging nationalism of the opening *Molto allegro*, the sinuous lyricism of the *Andante* and the relentless agitation of the finale's insistent triplet motif.

And in Bartok's predominantly reflective characteristically tough, No. 2 quartet they gave a mature survey of the composer's stark, crazy panoramas.

A tax on diversity and innovation

One job for an independent newspaper is reporting — and then evaluating — the pleadings of pressure groups and special interests. People, for instance, putting cases to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as he prepares his Budget. That reporting and assessment role, however, can get a bit sticky when the special interest under potential attack is newspaper publishing itself. Even so, Mr Lawson would be wrong to slap VAT on books, newspapers, magazines, and wrong for reasons stretching far beyond the immediate business interests of The Guardian or the other publications within our group.

We know, for a fact, that such thoughts are in Mr Lawson's mind. They were there last year, and aborted at the last moment. This year the Treasury's dulcet nodders and winkers have been floating wheezes. And last year's wheeze has been modded about and winked over. Equally the special interests have been alerted. On Wednesday the Society of Authors staged an eloquent rally against VAT on books. Yesterday the Newspaper Society produced a daunting (and independent) account of VAT's probable impact on the regional press.

Though the two cases are, naturally, different in detail, they are absolutely together in their broad thrust. Simply, that this measure would be a disaster: and a very specific sort of disaster. It wouldn't wipe out book publishing overnight. Nor would it wipe out the regional press. But far beyond the margin, it would dramatically narrow diversity and choice, and thus freedom of expression.

In some countries with a written constitution the public's right to information is enshrined as a fundamental of democracy. And such a right, in practical terms, implies the means to disseminate information. Where means are involved, inevitably, different countries find different ways. Many European nations — as Peter Fiddick reports today — either impose or have imposed a tax on their books and newspapers. But the rates of tax vary widely.

And they also extend may overt and covert subsidies. There is no clean break between the State and the Press. There is, instead, a complex financial mechanism of sticks and carrots. To take one isolated Treasury argument — that VAT is a "European" policy which must now, in all honour, be applied to take only a small segment of the whole picture. The financial and political relationships between French, Belgian and German newspapers and their governments are not the relationships we have here. One may prefer such models. But prying in aid of odd bits of them is dishonest. The current British situation, by contrast, is clear enough. We have no written constitution. But we have long since decided that a Tax on Knowledge is antipathetic to democracy. And we have declined — with basic commonsense — to try to define what we mean by knowledge.

The twin diagnoses for books and for the regional press fit snugly. On the surface publishing seems healthy enough. More titles than ever before were published in England in 1984. But anyone who cares to look beyond those figures will see that the book trade itself was stagnant. In a sense the proliferation of titles reflected the thrashings for survival of a host of small businesses. If VAT comes for books, it is infinitely predictable that the smallest and weakest — houses and sellers will crumble first. And that the less profitable publications of the bigger houses will be pared away. Specifically: first novels, serious literature, academic work and poetry. The coffee tables of the nation will remain glossily safe. But the vital margin of experiment and innovation will be gone.

Britain's regional press finds itself similarly placed. It is an area of intense activity on the surface. But profits are (historically) slim; and the wave of freeshoot publications day by day, makes it harder for the paid-for papers — the papers with staffs who cover your courts and your councils — to make ends meet. Month by month, local weekly and evening papers are closing down or (perforce) becoming freeshoots themselves. There is no one left to sit in courts or councils, or to report the MP with a burning issue on his mind. Left to the natural cycle of things, perhaps, a more stable balance may in time be struck. But VAT at this stage would be lethal, as yesterday's accounting report from Price Waterhouse amply demonstrates.

Some of the advice the Chancellor has been receiving shrugs off such fears, to be

sure. Sundry backbenchers, too, have made much of the Fleet Street bingo wars. Since when was Bingo untaxable knowledge? But the fundamental point, now clearly established, is that the worst sufferers from VAT would not for a second be the bingo brigade. Bingo has become the symbolic sword of hugely capitalised multinational groups attempting to bludgeon each other into submission. They are the strong who may expect to pick up (and profit from) the pieces that the smaller fish abandon in taxed extremity. If Mrs Thatcher doesn't like the bingoing growths, she can always tax them. But the heart of this matter is quite different. It is the real threat diversity.

The freight equation

To the punters, shivering on suburban platforms, it matters little whether yesterday's chaos was official or otherwise. As for British Rail it is still busily totting up the cost just in case the board does decide to go ahead with its threatened action for damages. What is already clear beyond all doubt is that the coal dispute has cost the freight division some £200 million in lost revenues. Of that, management estimates, at least £50 million has gone because some of its own employees are refusing to carry such coal as is available, the oil that could be substituted for it and the steel which could be worked with "black" coal. To date—and despite the claims of harassment from the new, left wing alliance of rail unions—BR has in general bent over backwards to avoid provoking that relative handful of railwaymen who have refused to perform their normal duties, on the footplate or in the signal box, in support of the miners. There have been no sackings and no indefinite suspensions. Those taking sympathetic action are merely sent home for the shift. (The unions make up their pay, incidentally.)

All of which suggests that, like last year's two abortive dock strikes, yesterday's stoppage was a somewhat contrived event, designed to show solidarity without stretching the patience of the mass of the lads too far. It was also designed to provoke management into some form of punitive response which might just spark off a more general rail strike. That is why the board should think long and hard before going through with the legal action it has threat-

ened. Tactically they may consider it smarter to gather evidence of the cost of yesterday's exercise and then present it to the unions with a choice: no action for damages if you can guarantee no further protest stoppages. But equally it is high time the board spelled out to its employees the devastating impact the coal strike and the continuing Midlands boycott is having on the freight division which depends heavily upon the bulk movement of coal and steel. Both iron and finished steel are now being transported by the new 38 tonne lorries which have proved their viability these past months. Eventually much bulk ore transport must return to rail. But not all of it. The British Steel Corporation will almost certainly continue to move much of its finished steel by road. That way the staff is more likely to beat future disputes.

The Central Electricity Generating Board is also likely to retain its new mix of road and rail transport. This is work gone beyond recall. It is impossible to quantify the other potential customers who must now feel that this is the age of the motorway. But BR has already chopped 120 jobs from the freight division with another 600 under threat. The planned, overnight Speedlink service—which demands heavy investment—is now in danger because the cash is no longer flowing through the system to finance it. Mr Jimmy Knapp of the railwaymen and Mr Ray Buckton of the locodrivers recently launched a drive to sell the railways as a reliable and socially beneficial public service. We wish them good fortune. But yesterday's events, alas could have been designed by some malignant road haulage pressure group to subvert their campaign.

Fuller speed ahead?

If the only argument for increasing the motorway speed limit was the wish to gratify the machismo of the upwardly mobile, outside lane, headlight flashers then it would be an easy one to oppose. Instinctive bloody-mindedness and considerations of the public good would be inseparable. There would be no good reason for changing the 70 miles per hour maximum that is now one of the few legacies of the Wilson years to have survived the Thatcher revolution.

In fact, as the Automobile Association has been saying for some time, there are practical arguments for allowing the limit

for cars to rise to 80 mph. For one thing, a higher limit would do something to cut down on the terrifying bunching that bedevils much motorway driving. For another, the existing limit is already more honoured in the breach. It is unenforced by the police, and an unenforced rule is generally a bad rule. It is by no means clear that any magic attaches to the 70 mph limit as far as the likelihood of accidents is concerned. An 80 mph limit would not make the British speed merchants of the European motorway system, France, Austria, Switzerland and Italy all have limits at this level. West Germany still has around this level. West Germany still has no autobahn speed limit at all, and the experimental 62 mph restriction which came into force between Hamburg and Bremen this week has been dictated by pollution considerations, not by safety fears.

This week's report from the all-party House of Commons Transport Committee adds its voice to those of the AA and the police in urging a new 80 mph limit. But such a change cannot be introduced in isolation from other road safety considerations, as the MPs' report fully recognises. The driving test needs to be improved. Public education for qualified drivers must be expanded. Rear seat belts have to be fitted compulsorily. Tighter speed restrictions are necessary on lorries and, especially, on coaches. Above all, enforcement has to be made effective. That will mean more radar traps and greater investment in speed surveillance technology. It means more and better policing. There are real civil libertarian implications certainly, but it is preferable for motorway law enforcement to concentrate on dangerous driving than on intercepting lawful picketing.

In the context of an enhanced and prioritised road safety programme, an increase in the speed limit to 80 mph is a desirable change. Even without these other measures, there is still a strong case for an experimental period. The important point is that particular limits should not become a totem pole. There is a danger of investing existing restrictions with an ideological significance that they should not have to bear. There is no more sense in abolishing all limits in order to please free market individualists than there is in imposing ever lower limits in order to compel people to use public transport. Private cars are a fact of life and a desirable one, even when used for commuting. Traffic safety regulations have to be judged according to their economic and social benefits, as well as their environmental effects.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When the Special Branch stands in for the police

Sir, — I was glad to have Mr Robert Cozens's explanation (Guardian, January 10) of the December/January delay in solving the murder of Miss Eileen Murray. Mr Tam Dalyell, MP, had hampered the investigation by claiming that British Intelligence was involved in her death, thus wasting police time. Now we have his explanation of the delay between March and December?

Obviously, I'm glad to hear from Mr Cozens (who as chief constable of West Mercia, should know) that Special Branch officers were involved in the murder inquiry on a "routine" basis because of manpower demands; it is good to know that they sometimes spend

their time on something more socially useful than bugging my phone. Now can somebody give me a list of the other "routine" investigations that Special Branch helped with during 1984, or was this the only case with no security implications that they changed to be involved with? There is no reason for refusing to give me such a list because, if they were investigating ordinary murders, burglaries and suchlike, the information cannot be classified; and if they helped to solve any of these crimes, it is only right that they should have the credit for it, to improve their present rather unfortunate image. — (Mrs) Janet Evans, Woburn, Buckinghamshire.

Gas blast

Sir, — The explosion at Putney last week and the subsequent exhortations by the gas boards, the regular and efficient servicing of gas installations is not only sensible but essential. The company concerned is by no means a tiny back-street concern.

My concern is that if the gas board is on the one hand claiming that servicing is essential, but on the other hand won't service particular systems, it's all very well bemoaning the public's lack of attention to servicing it at the same time the boards turn their backs when "unapproved" systems are installed.

Such an attitude seems at variance with the lesson learned from the Putney explosion: the need for "regular servicing and good workmanship." Yours, etc, Graham Cadman, Northampton.

Homes truth

Sir, — Despite many years' practical experience in local government finance I have never really understood the economic arguments which prompted the Government to tighten restrictions on local authorities' rights to spend the proceeds of council house sales.

The excellent article by Terence Higgins (Agenda, January 14) partially clarifies the position. Mr Higgins states that if a council sells a house and does not spend the money immediately it either reduces its borrowing or lends the money so that the PSBR is reduced.

Conversely, if the council later wishes to spend the money it has to borrow it back thus increasing the PSBR. I can understand the concern of the Government about fluctuations in PSBR from year to year, but presumably if a council sells a house and spends the proceeds in the same year then the PSBR argument no longer applies.

There would appear to be a case therefore to allow local authorities complete freedom to spend money in the same year in which it is received. — Yours faithfully, K. Nutland, (Borough Treasurer), Cheltenham Borough Council.

Seeing red over a green belt sell-out

Sir, — Our association is very grateful for the publicity given to a local problem which is causing us much anxiety. I refer to your articles of January 8 and January 14 on the 90-acre site by the M25/JM1 junction near St Albans partly owned by the Department of Transport, which was advertised for warehousing or similar development. The Department of Transport has admitted "a mistake" in so describing it, but the sale is going ahead—as your first article says—on the basis of the original advertisement. A contract for an option on the site is expected within two months.

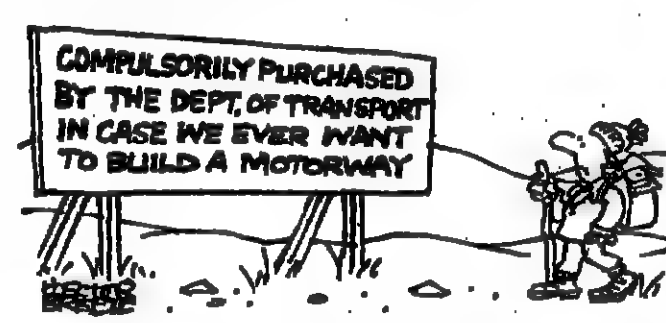
Compulsorily acquired agricultural land—which it still is, and agricultural priority land at that—it should be safe, according to the Department of Transport which says the rules were changed in 1979 with local authorities having to bid in the open market. Such a purchase could ensure continued green belt status and should be facilitated. Mr Patrick Jenkins' words last Sunday on Chiltern Radio that the Government was not in the business of making profits from such sales should be capable of being interpreted as Government policy.

Miscellany

Sir, — The excellent letter (January 11) of Ian Flintoff describing the self-disenfranchisement of the electorate to the point of caring more about Purple Rain by Prince than acid rain by the CEEG, omits only the observation of the prevailing sense of political hopelessness encountered in all quarters.

Add to that the apparent move of Spike Milligan (Letters, January 12) one of the few truly free spirits of the times, from Bayswater to Hadley Common where he is a neighbour of Cecil Parkinson, and the gloom is total. — Yours faithfully, Brian Green, Cambridge.

Sir, — In a book review (Arts Guardian, January 14), Martin Pawley writes that the Transitory Architecture Group, of which I was chairman, "recommended a cut of one-third in the number of graduate places in polytechnic schools of architecture." We made no such recommendation. — Yours faithfully, (Lord) Escher, Watlington, Oxford.



both departments, one is even less certain. Every tier of local government, from county to Parish, is opposed, as are all interested organisations from the Hertfordshire Society to village residents' associations. Early inquiries regarding local authority purchase were rebuffed by the Department of Transport which says the rules were changed in 1979 with local authorities having to bid in the open market. Such a purchase could ensure continued green belt status and should be facilitated. Mr Patrick Jenkins' words last Sunday on Chiltern Radio that the Government was not in the business of making profits from such sales should be capable of being interpreted as Government policy.

There should be a unified policy, of course. Perhaps the left hand does not want to know what the right hand is doing. — Yours faithfully, Bert Neasele, Brickley Wood Ratepayers' Association, St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Sir, — Your article, "Mrs Chalker 'neutral' towards use of land bought for M-ways" (January 14) speaks of the value of land at a junction of motorways which was compulsorily purchased by the Ministry of Transport in 1982 for £3,000 an acre. The portion surplus to requirements is now expected to fetch £250,000 an acre.

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"right to free speech over the radio" to attack democracy, promote anti-Semitism, and embrace the cause of the junior partner in the Axis.

When the fascist ship sank, Pound was one of the rats rounded up from the wreckage. A confessed enemy of his country and its aims, he was not shot out of hand; democrats don't do that sort of thing to those who try to destroy them. He was indicted for high treason.

And now we come to the "inhuman conditions" in which Pound was kept. There is a kind of creature which used to call itself an intellectual — perhaps Mr Cookson can tell me its current label — and believes that no crime, no foulness may be brought home to somebody whose writings have been judged to have literary merit. Some of these creatures, who admired Pound's writing, organised a great hullabaloo over Pound. I hope that the seer was regarded as insane.

Pound was kept then in far less inhuman conditions than had been imposed on

arises only because public money was spent on motorways to run between great conurbations which themselves were established by private and public capital and labour. No contribution was made to either by the original owners of the land under consideration.

We hear of the dramatic facts of this case only because a public body is involved and publicity results. But it involves only an infinitesimal part of land in the vicinity of motorways. Almost all the rest is in private hands and transactions are confidential to the parties involved. Further, such land is only part of the land of our country, almost all of which is in private hands and which ultimately reaps the benefit of the efforts of the whole community.

The value of all land is obviously a proper subject for taxation, for such taxation would take back for public purposes values created by the public itself. This is the value of labour and capital of the burden of taxation which for so long has hindered economic progress.

Edgar S. Buck, 115 Cyfford Road, Cardiff.

those whom he and his host Mussolini had attacked — the Jews and democrats of Italy and the other fascist powers — and in time he was released as a baleful and portentous reminder of the power of fascism and the weakness of democracy of liberal democracy.

Not all writers, I am glad to say, were or are so soft on fascism. George Orwell, who recognised stupidity as a defence in the case of P. G. Wodehouse, yet had the intellectual fibre to condemn the effect of writing, however aesthetically appealing, which promoted fascism: and Robert Graves, whose feeling for his country and its ideals had prompted him to return to Britain from Spain for the duration of the war, politely but firmly rejected appeals to join his name to the "hands off poor Pound" list.

Forty years ago fascism was badly mauled. It wasn't killed, and it's trying to revive. If it's allowed, it will do so. It is time to destroy democracy. It must be stopped.

Stephen Meyer, 5 Waverley Road, Leeds.

Legislative fields

Sir, — I am delighted to inform Caroline Penn (Letters, January 15) that her plea for some public recognition of the loss of school playing fields has been heard.

On January 25 I hope to introduce the Sports Field and Recreational Facilities Bill for its second reading in the Commons. My bill, supported by many colleagues and the Central Council for Physical Recreation and others, would empower the secretary of state to monitor the increasing practice of developing playing fields; form a national register which would give an up-to-date assessment of the practice; and encourage the greater community use of sports facilities.

Nottinghamshire County Council is not alone in taking falling school rolls as an excuse to sell off its school grounds, thus releasing additional cash to be spent on non-sporting projects. Once built on, these open spaces are gone forever, not even allowing play areas for those children who will live in their newly constructed homes.

Many acres are now under threat from the disposal of such land by local authorities, the Ministry of Defence, nationalised industries, and large firms. My bill succeeds — and I am pleased to have enlisted two Nottingham MPs as sponsors — at least an early-warning system will be established that will sound public opinion before drastic policies are pursued. — Yours faithfully, John Carlisle, MP, (C. Luton N), House of Commons.

Sir, — Mrs C. Penn is, I am afraid, confused in that she wants national policy for improving schools to be imposed on local authorities. But the bits of school playing fields we in Nottinghamshire decide to sell were surplus according to national (DES) policy standards.

She fails to distinguish the general from the particular. It is, in my view, reasonable to sell surplus assets especially when the Government is severely rationing capital spending; but I accept that a case could be made for retaining a particular plot of surplus school land if, say, open space was scarce in the neighbourhood. It is to this that Mrs Penn should be turning our attention.

As for Labour's opponents winning control of county councils after May, all I can say is this: not only would that be late to save playing fields already sold, it would also be a certain recipe for damage to the educational fabric. Nottinghamshire Tories say they would admit private pupils to county music schools. Informed opinion here estimates that they would also cut £15 million at least from educational spending on county schools and colleges. — Yours, Mike McDougall, (Chairman of Further Education), Nottinghamshire County Council.

The foetal position

Sir, — Leo Abse's muddled article, (January 11) deserves a sharp response. It is factually wrong, swooningly enthusiastic about purely pragmatic and self-serving notions of applied science, wilfully simplistic in its "enlightened" attack on the stand against anti-human practices.

The opposition to the cultivation, experimentation on, and sale of "live" human foetuses is based on the belief that medical experimentation on human beings is only justified when it is for the benefit of the patient. Once that principle goes, any benefit is for others, anything is possible and, ultimately, the "greater good" if it is done in the name of medical progress. Why should we not produce a range of "developed foetal products," going beyond the normal stage at birth, for our noble purposes? The cost is the dismembering and experimental and commercial use of embryonic human beings do not base their opposition on the existence of a "soul," whatever that may be. If we cannot define the person, which human life begins in its possible procedure in such cases is to give the benefit of the doubt.

Knowledge in itself is good, but it cannot be acquired at any price. Its cost is the dismembering and disposal of a living human creature, even at an early stage of its development, we must either acquire it in other ways or do without it. Every time another foetus is destroyed in its name, a further dehumanisation has taken place. The fact that there is a handy supply of ready-made experimental subjects will in itself tend to prevent us from acquiring the knowledge of other more human and humane ways.

No-one I know in the "befuddled" anti-abortion lobby has "smelt blood" or "made it clear that they prefer to condone murdering and late abortion rather than accept in-vitro technology which creates life not destroys it." Anyone who is opposed to abortion thinks that late (or early) abortions are wrong, precisely because they do what in-vitro technology ultimately does — they destroy life.

Leo Abse's argument, or rather diatribe, is purely ad hominem. To present a reasoned case is one thing. To distort is another. — Yours faithfully, 14 Heaton Grove, Bradford, W. Yorkshire.

Flip side

Sir, — Yet another Miscellaneous double solution (cf. Letters, January 16). As the Americans have rejected the dollar piece, preferring to retain their dollar bills, Eric Knott's proposal (Letters, January 15) to use dollars instead of pounds would in addition end all the arguments about the pound coin. — Yours sincerely, Jack Griffiths, Ferring by Sea, West Sussex.

EXTORTIONIST?



This week, the New Statesman demonstrates how the Government plans to rob 8 million TSB investors of £800 million.

Also, the next General Secretary of the Labour Party, Tribune (part 2), Who runs Ronald Reagan? and much more.

New Statesman

The weekly for people with minds of their own. Every Friday, 80p.

For one thing, a something to cut... For another, more honoured... enforced by the... rule is generally... means clear that... 70 mph limit as... accidents is con... would not make... merchants of the... m. France, Aus... all have limits at... Germany still has... at all, and the... restriction which... Hamburg and Bre... dictated by polit... safety fears... from the all-party... sport Committee... the AA and the... 10 mph limit. But... be introduced in... 1 safety consider... fully recognises... to be improved... ifed drivers must... belts have to be... ter speed restric... torries and, espe... all, enforcement... That will mean... ater investment in... nology. It means... There are real... sons certainly, but... away law enforce... dangerous driving... d picketing, an... enhanced and... rogramme, an in... it to 80 mph is a... without these other... strong case for an... important point is... could not become a... of investing... an ideological sig... d not have to bear... in abolishing all... a free market ind... in imposing ever... compel people to... ate cars are a fac... ae, even when used... safety regulations... rding to their eco... as, as well as their

DIARY

THE Norwegian Government is just a touch embarrassed by the forthcoming visit to their country of the Zambian President, Kenneth Kaunda. The embarrassment stems from the fact that President Kaunda will be accompanied by 67 aides for meetings scheduled to last one and a half hours.

The Norwegian Foreign Office has announced that it will only pay the expenses of 17 of these party Zambia will pick up the bill for the rest who will stay in hotels while Kaunda stays as a guest of King Olav. After two days in Oslo the party plans to move on to the old whaling city of Sandefjord for a couple of days off. Eighty rooms have been booked at the Park Hotel, where rooms cost £60 a night for a single and £80 for a double.

The embarrassment to the Government is compounded by the £13 million it is giving to Zambia in this year (Britain is giving £14 million). There is considerable fear that the scale of the visit could harm the public attitude to foreign aid.

THIS week's Tribune takes a historical look at the troubled question of surrogacy. Surrogate motherhood has not such a bad press in the past as it has in the present. "God, for one, was an early proponent and the Virgin Mary was by no means reticent for the part she played."

MARTYN Goff, Director of the National Book League, has just had the honour of having one of his own books banned. His early gay novel, The Youngest Director ("my way of coming out on a big scale"), which has just been reissued, has been refused entry to a Pennsylvania prison by the prison authorities, claiming that it is "sexually explicit... poses a threat to security... facilitates criminal activity." Besides which, the superintendent has added: "The entire publication is homosexual in nature."

The British publishers, Brilliance Books, have written back pointing out that Mr Goff has been made an OBE and, therefore, "suitable company for the Queen." Whether this will sway the superintendent's mind it is hard to predict.

LAST year's three day self-improvement seminar, the Mind Body Spirit festival at Olympia was, alas, the last. The big money, in the shape of Earle Court/Olympia subsidiary Philbeach Events, has pulled out after sustaining losses and the organisers of the idea, Mr Graham Wilson, is not prepared to mount a 1985 festival himself. Aware punters will have to make do with smaller events in Southampton and Brighton and Mr Wilson's Festival of the Spirit, planned for early May in London.

THOSE of you who yearn for those glorious summer days of 1983 when Britain could once again hold its head up high may be interested to read Donald Featherstone's new edition of Battles with Model Soldiers in which he writes: "The British recapture of the Falkland Islands in 1982 was so unique as to be a 'must' for wargaming, for which it is ideally suited."

Falklands wargaming "poses classical table-top-battling features... handling such inspiring troops as British Paras, Guards... in such easily reproducible actions as Goose Green, Darwin... you must come to grips with the difficulty of finding volunteers to handle the enemy forces. Perhaps a role for Denis during the twilight retirement years of Mrs T."

JUST because the Greenham women are paranoid it doesn't mean somebody isn't out to get them. Indeed, there are some women at the base who believe they are paranoid precisely because... they believe... someone has fired up for them to be bombarded with ultra low frequency sound from the base. Other symptoms many of them have felt recently include nausea, headaches, dizziness and loss of memory. A group calling itself Scientists Against Nuclear Arms has promised to investigate. Then we'll know whether it's paranoia or paranoia.

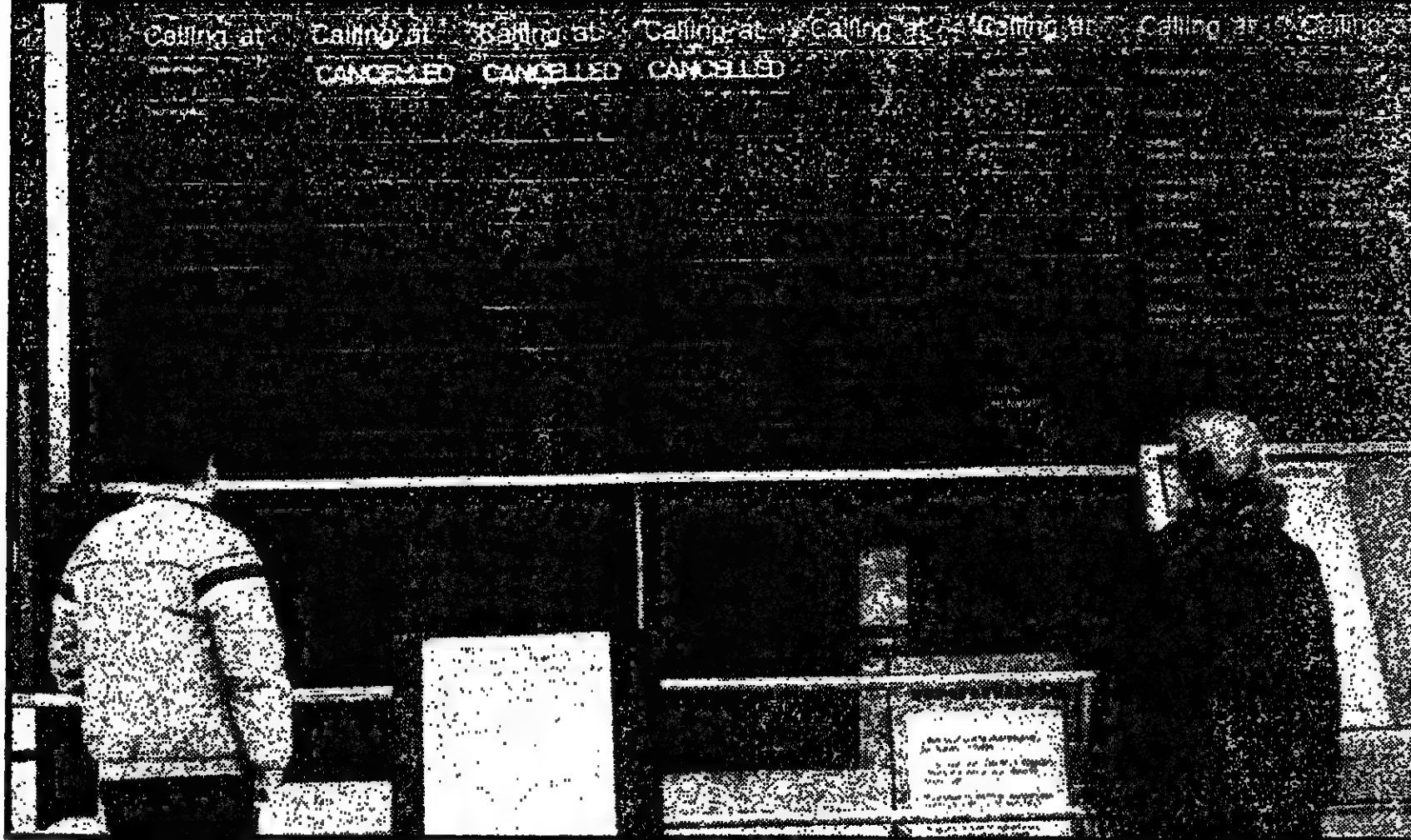
LOBBY journalists had a meeting this week to try to end some of the secrecy which surrounds the business of reporting Westminster politics. A vote was taken at the meeting as to whether to allow full reporting of the meeting. This was convincingly rejected by a majority of 24, the four being Messrs Anthony Beving of the Times, John Cole of the BBC, David Healy of the Press Association and Malcolm Echo of the New York Echo. There are these things always leak out in the end.

Alan Rusbridger

PATRICK WINTOUR on the railmen of Coalville who won't move coal

The strike that's busy going nowhere

MR ROY Butlin, the leader of the National Union of Railwaymen at Coalville, the freight depot at the root of yesterday's 24-hour strike, was a happy man yesterday. For months he has been agitating his executive to call industrial action in protest at the treatment management were handing out to his 60 members who have been blocking coal trains in support of the miners. He admitted last night: "We've indicted one day of pain on the passengers, but we've had it for 42 weeks. This strike will put the morale of my members up 1,000 per cent. It's a real shot in the arm."



Stations at a standstill. Picture by Kenneth Saunders

Mr Butlin and his colleagues have supported the miners' strike since April 6 by refusing to move deep-mined coal. Normally the depot moves between 100,000 and 130,000 tonnes of coal a week, mainly to Didcot power station. Up until June 11 they agreed to move open-cast coal on three trains a day in return for being given alternative work when they refused to shift deep-mined coal, but the agreement broke down.

The decision to follow the union executive's blocking instruction was made by a show of hands vote at two branch meetings on April 3 and 7. In June a further meeting voted 57-1 to continue the action. Since then there has been no further vote. Mr Butlin openly admits there has been an erosion of support for the action within the depot, partly due to the movement of coal by lorry and the apparent futility of the miners' strike itself. Nevertheless, at elections in November for the local district committee of the union there was a straight fight between those in support of moving coal and the coal blockers. In a secret ballot Mr Butlin won with about 80 per cent of the votes.

The blocking decision has cost the railmen dear in lost earnings. Each shift the railmen report for duty and if the man is rostered for a coal train, the local manager is likely to ask "is it coal or dole today?" If the railman refuses to work on a coal train, he is suspended without pay. Normally a Coalville worker would take home £90

a week. From April to June 25 the men were eligible only for £1 a day strike pay, but the union's annual conference increased this to £11 a shift in an attempt to bolster the strike. This official pay has been topped up by collections. Mr Butlin has spoken at 38 meetings since the strike began. In total the railmen have lost hundreds of pounds.

Besides the loss of earnings, the atmosphere in the town has been poisoned. Only 30 of Leicestershire's 2,500 miners are on strike. As a result the 200-odd railmen and striking miners are pitted against the rest of the town. The working railmen feel strongly that the coal they are producing

legged harassment would end.

The pressure for a rail strike had built up after December 17 when BR started moving a token number of coal trains for the first time since the strike began. A signaller who had refused to move coal was called to an interview with Mr Sam Reed, the area manager in Derby, booking him off from work that day. This enabled management to bring in a relief signaller from outside the area who was willing to move coal trains. As a result the chain of signal boxes along one line from Bagworth pit to Drakelow power station was complete. The NUR claim that the management misled that the man sent home was mentally

unstable, but this is denied by BR. Management now claim he is happy to be transferred to another area and agrees that he was fairly treated. Mr Butlin accepts that the signaller does not wish to return to his former post, but only due to management pressure. As a result of this man's removal between 2 and 4 coaltrains are now running each day, each carrying 1,000 tonnes of coal.

The local NUR regards the treatment of the signaller who refused to move coal as symptomatic of more widespread harassment intended to make the men end their action. They believe Mr Reed, a new area manager, was brought in at Derby at the beginning of September

after the previous manager had failed to break the action. Within a month of being appointed Mr Reed called a sudden meeting at the depot on September 25. According to minutes written by the NUR Mr Reed said that unless there was a return to normal working within three days, he would close one depot, dismiss 13 trainees, move all non-coal traffic away from Coalville, close every manual signal box on the line and refuse redundancy payments to any man made redundant.

Senior management at British Rail have categorically denied that there was any closure threat even if the men continued to block coal. But Mr Butlin insists, "The men who were at that

meeting know what was said. It's in our minutes but they won't give us a copy of their minutes because they deem the meeting to have been informal."

On the night of the meeting where the alleged closure threat was made, British Transport police searched the homes of five NUR men and two Aslef men. Within a fortnight three of the men had been charged and dismissed from the railways. One storeman had been found to have BR property, including cloths and soaps worth £1.74.

After the rail unions threatened a strike last week, negotiations led to the man, who is taking early retirement, having his dismissal collectively rescinded. He will appear in the Crown Court on January 22. A second man was found guilty of possessing locomotive plates and was subsequently fined in court. He was reinstated on appeal.

A third man charged with possessing more substantial BR goods pleaded guilty in court and did not appeal against his sacking. On December 15, four days before coal trains were moved for the first time, BR began disciplinary proceedings against two of the other men raided. One of the men was charged with possessing a cloth and two used batteries. After an angry reaction from Mr Butlin the sacking threat was removed.

BR insists that the timing of both the raids and the subsequent charges are coincidental. It will not discuss the details of the charges since they are being dealt with by the courts. However, the NUR emphatically links the raids with the unusually harsh punishment given in Board's desire to get coal trains moving to the power stations.

BR senses that a majority of Coalville men do privately want to work coal trains and that they are being bullied by their union. They believe that the action may permanently threaten the future of the depot as contracts may be permanently lost to road hauliers. Last year BR freight made a profit of £8 million and this year the loss in revenue so far has already exceeded £200 million.

foetal ition

Leo Abbe's muddled (January 11) de sharp response, it is wrong, swanning about purh and and utilitarian applied science and simplistic in its "against anti-humanis... opposition to the cul... experimentation on... of live human... is based on the fa... at medical experime... human beings is... satisfied when it is... best of the patient... nat principle goes... an effort is for oth... ing is possible and... permissible, partic... it is done in the... of medical progress... who do not produce... of "developed foet... " going beyond the... stage at birth, the... ple purposes... who are against the... mental and commercial... embryonic human be... a no the existence of... " whatever that... we cannot define... at which human... the only possible... in such cases is in... the benefit of the... ledge in itself is... but it cannot be... at any price... the disembodied... al of a living man... re, even if it is... of its development... is either to do without... ways or do without... time another form... ed in its name, a... desensitisation... a handy septe... made experiment... will in itself be... at as from acquie... knowledge in other... and humane ways... one I know of the... ed "anti-abortion... smut, that the... le to clone serv... ate abortion rather... in vitro life and... i, creating life and... it. Anyone who... to abortion inflic... (or, precisely, be... to what... gology ultimately... destroy life... s Abbe's argumen... or distribute, is pure... To... ed case is one oth... history is an othe... Whitehouse, eaton Grove, ford, W Yorkshire.

JONATHAN STEELE reports on the complex communities of New Caledonia.

Below, ELAINE METAIS describes the roots of the Kanak insurrection

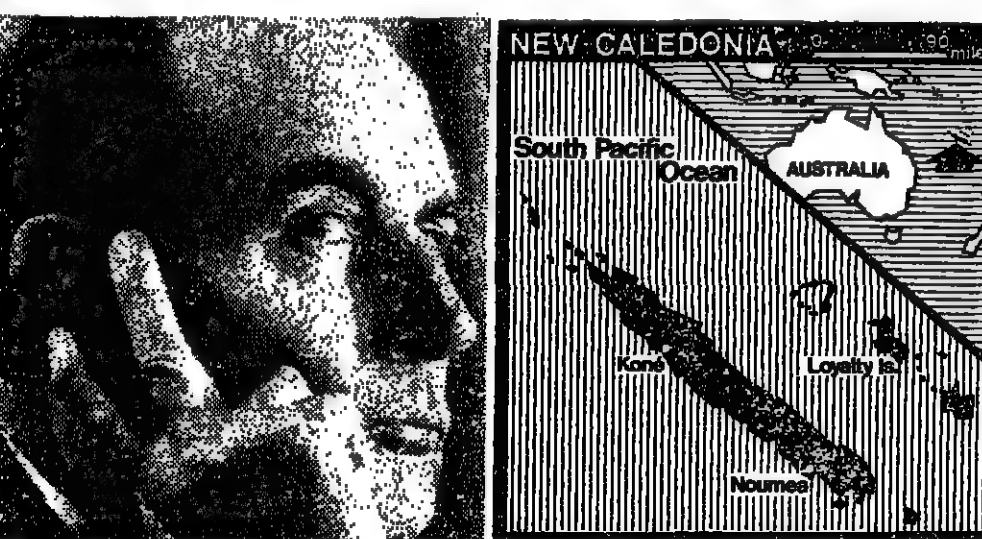
Mitterrand's island of broken dreams

NEW Caledonia, where President Mitterrand arrives tomorrow has been variously likened to a "piece of imperial confetti" and to Algeria whose fight for independence tore France apart 25 years ago. With his dramatic gamble in deciding to fly out to the island, Mitterrand has overnight ensured that the two analogies will now take precedence. The crisis in New Caledonia is no-one's joke.

With a numerically large, and economically affluent population, the white French settler community in New Caledonia is not just a small minority. Like the pieds-noirs in Algeria, they are a sizeable group with powerful supporters among Mr Mitterrand's opponents in France. Indeed, many former pieds-noirs went to New Caledonia after Algeria's independence. As with the war in Algeria, France has tried to find a compromise to satisfy the indigenous majority and the settlers, and appears to be signally failing.

The French first took possession of New Caledonia 132 years ago. To run the plantations and later the mines, they brought in workers from Indochina, Indonesia and other French Pacific islands such as Tahiti, whose Polynesian culture is completely distinct from that of the indigenous Melanesians or Kanaks. Over time, many of these new immigrants have become shopkeepers and small businessmen in the classic three-tiered structure of colonialism.

Out of New Caledonia's 140,000 population, the Kanaks account for roughly 43 per cent, the white settlers for 36 per cent, and the Asians and Polynesians 21 per cent. Between them the French and the other immi-



President Mitterrand: trying to save France's face on the other side of the world

grants have been able to frustrate the Kanak desire for independence and land reform. Although they form only a third of the population, the French own two-thirds of the land. New Caledonia has one of the largest deposits of nickel in the world, and this too is owned by French companies. The islands also have chrome, iron ore, and manganese.

When Mr Mitterrand came to power in 1981 it was clear that the islands' colo-

niel status could not remain untouched. Mr Giscard d'Estaing's policy of holding the islands for ever could not last. But would they get autonomy or independence? Encouraged by the independence won by other islands such as Vanuatu (the former New Hebrides), the Kanaks increased their demands. The French settlers ruled out any change.

The Government in Paris first stripped the local territorial assembly, dominated

by anti-independence parties, of its legislative powers. Then, at the beginning of this year, Paris proposed a referendum giving voters the choice of maintaining the status quo or moving towards "independence" associated with France. The second option, clearly favoured by Mr Mitterrand, was meant to encourage the least hardline of the settlers and immigrants to join forces with the more moderate of the Kanaks.

Under the proposals France would retain control over the islands' foreign affairs and defence, and supply the police. French citizens who declined to take up New Caledonian citizenship would receive the special status of "privileged resident." They would also have special property rights in the capital, Noumea, which would have a separate status somewhat like Hong Kong.

It was an awkward package that attempted to find a middle way. Any hope that it could hold the line was lost when police killed the charismatic Kanak socialist leader, Eloi Machoro, on Saturday. The lines hardened on both sides, and Mr Mitterrand has now stepped into a collapsing situation. Whether he has the skill or the political courage of a De Gaulle to bite the independence bullet remains to be seen.

PETER FIDDICK on a Budget fear

VAT on papers, a taxing matter

AS BUDGET Day nears, and the publishing industries' palms grow clammy at the prospect of the Chancellor slapping VAT on newspapers, books, and magazines, the European dimension begins to enter the debate. A reason for such a move, some say, is not to drop a potential quarter-billion into the borrowing requirement bucket, but to take another harmonious step towards Europe.

It is true that almost every other member of the European Community puts VAT on newspapers or magazines, or at least the advertisements they carry. But it is also true that none of them apply it at the standard rate for other goods. And below the very unharmonised application of VAT in Europe, there is a web of subsidies and other special conditions which make the true tax position of publishers in those countries extremely hard to define, but almost certainly easier. The need to give the press special treatment is widely accepted.

The VAT position is relatively straightforward. Newspapers and magazines are zero-rated in Belgium, Denmark, and Greece, as are newspapers, but not most magazines in Italy. Rates of 6 and 7 per cent in Luxembourg and West Germany respectively are half the standard rate. In Holland, where the standard rate is 19 per cent, newspapers are taxed at 5 per cent and magazines at 4 per cent.

The swinging VAT in the Republic of Ireland has a standard rate of 35 per cent — and a press in real economic trouble aggravated by a 23 per cent rate which is expected to be brought down to nearer the half-way mark.

France, where the standard rate is 18.6 per cent, has a 4 per cent rate for magazines and evening or Sunday papers, but a special rate for morning papers of 7 per cent on only 30 per cent of turnover, which comes out at just above 2 per cent.

Even leaving aside questions of principle, about taxing the printed word, or knowledge, or ideas, a compelling technical reason for not taking the VAT road has been raised in this winter's urgent probe into the economic and legal implications. It is suggested that under EC directive on VAT No 6, it is laid down that while it is permissible to stay on zero-rating if that was the original position, once a move off it has been made, there is no going back.

But governments can take with one hand and give with another. The Royal Commission on the Press, as recently as 1977, detailed the wide range of special treatments and subsidies afforded to the press in other coun-

tries, and a recent scan of the field by David Newell of the Newspaper Society's government and legal department found little changed. Most countries give a concessionary postage rate to the press, as happens here, and others do likewise with telecommunications charges, as we do for overseas telegrams via BT telex. There is an EC agreement giving a quota for tariff-free imports of newspaper from outside the community, which British publishers also benefit from.

But these are the only special advantages given in this country. Elsewhere, other benefits range from government loans and direct subsidies to relief from non-VAT taxes, sometimes in ways intended to favour particular categories of publication.

France, for example, allows the press partial tax exemption on profits reinvested in a concession estimated to have been worth £33 million in 1984. Five newspapers there last year also shared a fund of some £1.33 million to subsidise newspapers whose circulations do not reach the quarter-million mark and which get less than a quarter of their revenue from advertising. French titles wanting to expand sales abroad can have the transport costs subsidised.

Both offer direct subsidies, in the latter case to encourage a politically diversified press, and such a scheme is being considered, where a press fund already exists to offer loans or credit to newspapers in difficulty and needing to reorganise. In Denmark and West Germany, grants or loans are available particularly for technological improvement.

The message British publishers would draw from all this is not that they need such special treatment, but that in imposing VAT, even at less than the full 15 per cent, Mr Lawson would be treating publishing more severely than he might know, relative to the European experience.

The case has been examined before, in great detail. As David Newell observes: "The Royal Commission concluded that the zero-rating of newspaper cover prices and advertising revenue should continue and was the most acceptable form of assistance to the newspaper industry. It rejected many of the alternatives which operate in other countries on the basis that such special treatment would affect the freedom of the press. There is every reason to suppose that the Royal Commission's report and conclusions are as valid today as they were in 1977."

A tribal society that has been turned upside down

AFTER 140 years of a French presence, the Kanaks of New Caledonia still maintain their old cultural separateness. Their vision of themselves is as direct products of the earth — like trees or fruit. Their country side is dotted with rocks and mountains which they believe are the seeds of the people themselves. According to their myths, the land, the language, and the people are

indivisible — and gifts of nature.

The Kanaks are divided into clans rather than families. These groups of relations, of 100 or 150 people, are all descended from a common ancestor and are linked by marriage to the clans with the same religion and language. There are no individual Kanaks. Each person is but a strand in a spider's web of family relations. They are bound together by traditional obligations — the sharing of goods, hospitality, gifts and services.

Kanak society is one of deep structural inequality. Within each region is a hierarchy of clans. Within each clan is a social hierarchy based on land. The society is made up of men rooted in a large but carefully delineated area. Women have no rights to land, but merely float between clans. By having children they unite the clans and ensure their continuation. Marriage is seen as an opening for trade.

More than 80 per cent of New Caledonia is mountainous. The rest is dry for three quarters of the year. The people, farm on the mountain sides or in river valleys. But they are also hunters, gatherers and fishermen, with a love of open spaces and a tradition of peace-making and conflict-solving — by the careful use

of space and by mutual surveillance. Their philosophy, religion, laws and language grew out of this peasant existence and are different from anything found in Europe or indeed in the Pacific.

In the early days of colonisation in the 1860s, reserves for the Kanaks were set aside. Under the warrior chief Atai, now a legendary hero of today's resistance, revolts began from 1878 onwards. The population fell dramatically, from 50,000 in 1850 to 25,000 in 1925, as modern illnesses swept through the island. The Kanaks took refuge in black magic to explain the disaster which had hit them. But the arrival of Protestant and Catholic missionaries with medical skills reversed the Kanaks' seemingly inexorable slide towards extinction.

With the arrival of the Americans in 1940, both men and women began to work for whites in large numbers. They got the right to vote. Schooling became obligatory. Change came overnight.

A Kanak bourgeoisie began to emerge. They sat in the territory's Assembly, or worked for French companies. It would be wrong to classify all these people as frustrated, although their salaries were very low. They had the same rights as a French worker — social security, holiday pay, etc —

without having had to fight for it. They were French citizens.

Everyone wanted to work for the whites. European models took over everything. Roads, electricity, television, radio, private cars, school and country buses spread through the island. Buying and selling in the white village shop became the centre of life.

The Kanak world has been turned upside down. They are no longer black, nor are they white. The old religion has degenerated, and the old rigorous tribal law and rules of respect are no longer followed. Clan families fall apart, the old order is gone, alienation has taken over. Individual freedom and the social mobility of the whites seem like utter disorder to the Kanak mind.

The economic, commercial and monetary systems imposed by the French are absolutely foreign to their structural system. How can you have a shop where the whole tribe can help themselves freely?

France has always been seen as bringing a fine civilisation, one rich in prestige-conferring goods and powerful techniques. As the Kanaks put it: "We have given you our land, our water, our sun and sea — surely you should give us everything in exchange."

They resent the whites for

not having provided them. In these 40 years, with a consumer society, a strong economy and European know-how, "You've kept it all for yourselves," they say. France has, of course, given compensations — scholarships, health services, roads, etc — but it has created a dependent mentality. An acute inferiority complex has worsened.

The Kanaks' way of thinking have produced serious difficulties in education, particularly with abstract thought and science. Their failures have been attributed to French racism. But the gulf between the Kanaks and the whites with their modern society has become enormous and unbridgeable. The various parties have turned this discontent into a political cause.

In a step towards decolonisation France began to return a certain amount of land to the most impoverished clans. But the Kanaks interpreted this as the beginning of a campaign which would restore all their lands.

At this point some French whites, and some of the mixed race group in Noumea and among the tribes, began a manipulation of the mass of the people which started the current vicious circle of confrontation — Le Monde.

Elaine Metais is professor of ethnology at the University of Bordeaux.



My son the union executive is briefing my son the lawyer...

ip side

Yet another... double solution... January 16)... Kanaks have... in a piece... their dollar bill... it's proposed... ary 15) to use... of pounds... tion end all the... is about the... — Yours sincerely... Grim... ing by Sea... t. Sussex.

AGENDA EXTRA

Rumbles of rebellion in the Tory backwoods jungle



Ian Aitken

IT IS easy to understand why prime ministers thoroughly enjoy jaunting round the world in funny cars. They back in the extravagant airport welcomes, savour the even more extravagant compliments of their hosts and count the bangs in their 18 gun salutes to see they are not being short-changed.

In such an atmosphere, the trials of the national currency and the tribulations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer must seem pretty small beer. It is all the

more unpleasant, therefore, when the VC10 touches down at Heathrow and the key winds of domestic reality close round one again.

Everyone who has ever been on a distant holiday knows the feeling on finding the red-link Final Notices heaped on the doormat. The temptation is to say with Mr Callaghan on his return from Guadalupe in 1979: "Crisis? What crisis?"

Not that Mr Callaghan actually used those words. What he was really saying in the VIP suite at Heathrow was: "Listen, I've been out there in the West Indies talking to the leaders of the Western Alliance about how to save the human race from nuclear annihilation, and you tell me you're cold and there are power cuts. Have a sense of proportion."

And one can see what he meant. But it doesn't alter the fact that that minor event, overblown as it was in the Tory newspapers, helped lose Labour the 1979 general election.

Not that it would be reasonable to conclude from Mr Callaghan's experience that the present Sterling crisis, coming so close on the heels of Mrs Thatcher's fantasy trip round the globe, is going to lose the Conservative Party the next general election. For one thing, no general election is in prospect for at least three years. For another, Mrs Thatcher has the overwhelming advantage of a split opposition.

But that does not alter the fact that the week we have just experienced will almost certainly prove to have had a profound effect on the future of the Conservative Party as a whole, and on the fortunes of Mrs Thatcher in particular. It is even possible that in years to come we will be able to point to January 1985 as the moment when Thatcherism began to loosen its baleful grip on the Tory Party.

In saying this, I recognise that I may be engaging in little more than wishful thinking. But I believe that there is substance in my dreams. For Mrs Thatcher is a politician who has pre-eminently presented herself to her country and her party as a leader who was going to reverse the dismal trend of the past and give Britain back its self-respect.

Yet, rightly or wrongly, there are few things more directly linked in the public mind with the value of our currency. A plunging pound looks very like national humiliation, and if Mrs Thatcher is now to become a victim of this simplistic view, she can hardly complain. She and her colleagues did a great deal to encourage it under successive Labour governments.

It is no good the Prime Minister going on Woman's Hour to declare in that awful breathy voice that she is totally puzzled by the whole Sterling crisis, and can't understand why the pound is so undervalued. The man in the street knows perfectly well why the dollar is strong and the pound is weak. It is because the American economy is strong and the British economy is weak.

But it is arguable that the pound will recover, and that the dollar exchange rate will float upwards again to something more like its purchasing-parity parity — or that it will at least stay where it is. In that case, will not all the events of the past week be comfortably forgotten by the time Chancellor Lawson rises to announce his tax cutting Budget?

It is possible. But I suspect that something even more fundamental has been happening than an all-too-obvious government panic over the pound. Under the surface, a sea change has been overtaking the mood and morale of the government and its parliamentary supporters.

The change reflects an increasingly desperate feeling among many Tory MPs that Ministers in general, and Mrs Thatcher in particular, have lost all sense of reality in the application of government policy. In no area is this more apparent than in the way in which Mr Patrick Jenkin has ploughed on with his plans for rate capping and for the abolition of the Greater London Council.

Few things affect Conservative Members of Parliament more directly in their constituency associations than local government, and a growing number of them are now convinced that the Cabinet not only should but must perform a massive U-turn. What is worrying them most of all, however, is the fear that Mrs Thatcher's sanity will not allow her to deliver.

On a number of other key issues of policy, not least on defence and the future of our conventional forces vis-à-vis the Trident missile programme, traditional Tory loyalists can be heard complaining that a change of direction is not only essential but in the long run inevitable. The only obstacle is Mrs Thatcher.

None of this means that there is anything remotely resembling a "Thatcher Must Go" movement among the vast body of the Parliamentary Conservative Party. Not even the wets seriously believe that she can be toppled in the foreseeable future, much though they would like it to happen.

But the evidence that the mood has changed in Mrs Thatcher's disadvantage is visible in the actual behaviour of MPs. To the astonishment of their elders and betters many ambitious young politicians now see mutiny and rebellion as positively helpful to their careers.

And it is this which may prove in the long run to be the most ominous development for Mrs Thatcher. Scarcely a year ago, the only rebels in sight were a handful of deeply disaffected grandees from the traditional wing of the party, together with an even smaller group of youthful Heavies representing unusually tolerant or even maverick constituencies.

Those of the loyalist segment of the party who were occasionally tempted to raise a particular issue were aware that in doing so they risked the displeasure of the adoring Thatcherite membership back home in their constituencies. To be fair to such people, quite a few did raise their voices, and took the consequent stick.

But what has happened now is that MPs and would-be MPs who are intent on building successful political careers have spotted that they can actually do themselves a bit of good in the party by criticising Government policy. And that, as the Labour Party has good reason to know, is a very dangerous development indeed.

WARNOCK, Gillick, AIDS. Baby Fae: 1985 is going to be a year of inquiry into medicine and medical ethics. So far, each of these issues has been treated as important but separate. In fact, they interlock with profound social and political implications for us all.

On December 20 I tabled an Early Day Motion drawing attention to the link between sexually transmitted diseases, the issue of contraceptive use, and the question of infertility which superficially promoted the consequences of the Warnock Report. The motion called upon Norman Fowler and Kenneth Clarke to promote a campaign through the Health Education Council warning of the danger to health in the current trends of sexual promiscuity. On January 18, the Royal College of Nursing predicted a potential one million cases of AIDS within the next six years.

The problem is urgent — not exclusively on moral grounds but also on social and ethical grounds and on the basis of plain, straightforward common sense: AIDS kills and sexual diseases induce infertility. The prime justification for the Warnock proposals is to cure infertility. How many people realise that often infertility is the direct consequence of abortion or sexual disease? And that abortion, sexual diseases and cancer are strictly the consequence of widespread and early sexual promiscuity, often begun before the age of 16.

In every case of abortion in an unmarried mother there is a significant risk of subsequent infertility and, where it is accompanied by sexual disease, the risk of AIDS or one of the other transmitted diseases. It is now established that AIDS can be transmitted between heterosexuals as well as between homosexuals. Doctors fear that we may be in the incubation period of a massive outbreak of AIDS, for which there is only a limited chance of survival.

What do people want? A campaign for a change in attitude towards sex, however difficult this may seem to achieve, or the death of so many of our young people?

I mentioned the connection between the Warnock Report and the health of the nation. The "justification" for the conclusions of the Warnock Report is infertility. Every one must surely agree, even where it is self-induced, that infertility is a tragedy.

But Warnock is only incidentally about infertility and, for that matter, commercial surrogacy. By deliberate intention or downright negligence, there is an obscuring of the long-term implications of the test tube baby experiments. Many leading experts dispute the necessity for them because there are alternative methods of achieving the elimination of deformities and disabilities.

So long as commercial surrogacy catches the headlines, the real in-depth research will continue. A single Bill to deal with commercial surrogacy is simply not enough and could be seen as a smokescreen unless accompanied by formal commitment to legislation in the other matters concerned.

In the Warnock Debate on November 23, I drew attention to the importance of Parliament considering the long term prospect of a super race served by surrogates. This seemed to me to be a likely consequence of the current experimental programme with the most appalling political consequences.

No licensing authority would have any realistic chance of controlling the inexorable progress down the route mapped out for it by the medical experts. A licence to control is a licence to authorise and the Warnock Committee was hopelessly obscure on the composition of the licensing authority itself and upon the question of medical ethics. Indeed, the Medical Research Council guidelines are themselves wholly inadequate to deal with the current problems arising in this field.

The question of what research is being done, who is doing it and why it is being done, must be fully investigated by Parliament.

The President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Mr M. C. Macnaughton, said that "those who would deny the possibility of preventing these terrible handicaps must bear a heavy responsibility if the recommendation of the Warnock Committee on embryo research up to 14 days is banned." Can he and others who support him present a clear picture of the kind of disaster which would emerge from the research which he recommends?

The responsibility for this lies in Parliament but Parliament must be properly informed. It is to be hoped that every possible support will be given to Enoch Powell's Bill, whose second reading is on February 15.

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William Cash is Conservative MP for Stafford.

In-house briefing

AN unlikely alliance of Tory right wingers and the Labour Party will be voting against the Corporal Punishment Bill when it comes up for a second reading in the Commons on Tuesday night.

The Tory MPs who are threatening to rebel against the government are angry because the Bill enables Britain to comply with a judgement by the European court on human rights allowing parents to write to head teachers to prevent their children being smacked.

The Tories, who have privately used their own form of corporal punishment against education ministers without success in the back bench education committee, opposed the Bill because it goes too far. Labour and the other opposition parties, protest that it does not go far enough.

SOME of the same Tory MPs are expected to vote against the government earlier in the day when the Commons is asked to rush through some urgently required extra money for the Community. Mingling may also be raised in the Lords when it passes through the Upper House later in the week.

THE Lords are geared up for the big day on Wednesday when the Opposition attack on the government's economic policies will herald the start of televised coverage. The broadcasters may also be interested to know that the government will be under attack on the Criminal Justice Bill from a formidable alliance of Lord Wynn Jones (Lab), Lord Wigoder (Lib), Hutchinson (SDP) and the former Master of Rolls, Lord Denning. They are opposing the controversial proposal to allow the Attorney General to appeal against sentences which it is judged are too lenient.

The Opposition, clearly realising their day for debate in the Commons will be overshadowed by the Lords, have chosen Wednesday to attack the closure of post offices.

TWO important back bench bills also are ailing. Mr Chris Smith (Lab, Islington South) will be seeking to abolish the much abused catch-all section two of the Official Secrets Act with a Bill to test support on Tuesday; and on Friday Miss Janet Fookes (Con, Plymouth Drake) will be seeking a second reading for her Bill to make "kero crawling" and harassment of women an offence.

Colin Brown



Ways of dealing with the regions — underfunded, underdeveloped and unemployed — have been broadcast by Edward Heath, right, among other Tories. Pictures by Don McPhee

What price the regions of the damned?

PETER HETHERINGTON

THE other Conservative Party which lives daily with the consequences of rising unemployment, falling investment and continuing business failures — managed another whimper of protest just a few days ago.

Edward Heath stole the show on BBC's Newswatch with another vigorous onslaught on the North/South divide in a speech in Sunderland (where one in four is out of work) followed by another call in Parliament for increased public investment instead of tax cuts.

But the implied criticisms of Government policy from several influential Tories in the region illustrated more graphically than Mr Heath did that other yawning divide — between some Conservatives in the once prosperous industrial heartlands and the dominant faction in Government, that other party of Mrs Thatcher, Mr Lawson and Mr Tebbit, which is instinctively hostile to concepts of regional aid.

The former PM's views, after all, are well known; those of the beleaguered Northern Tories rather less so.

It took two rather right-wing young Conservative MPs — Michael Fallon (Darlington) and Piers Merchant (Newcastle Central) — to flush out the muted, but nonetheless significant protests. Not for them the regional consensus that hefty Government aid is vital to provide the most equitable economic balance nationally, and to prevent overheating in the relatively more prosperous areas. Mr Heath, of course, went further, calling for State planning on the scale of the early sixties; an argument which appears treacherously corporatist to his opponents.

The two MPs, anticipating another gloomy state-of-the-region report, jumped in with both feet. "Each pres-

ons report has been a doom-laden beggar's charter and a very poor advertisement for the region," they whined.

"The North-east is not short of public money. Billions have been wasted away subsidising old industries, uneconomic pits, inefficient shipyards, instead of the New Tech and smaller companies."

In fact, much of the Northern coalfield was wiped out in the sixties while the Wearside shipyards not so long ago were regarded as world beaters.

Now, by far the largest slice of public money — around one third of government spending in the North East annually — goes to the unemployed. But let it pass.

The Opposition did not need to respond. Many regional Tories were clearly incensed; some publicly apologised for their colleagues and made clear that such views were certainly not representative of the party in the North.

Doom-laden or not, the report effectively put paid to any claims of economic recovery in the region which has the highest unemployment rate of mainland Britain: (19 per cent officially and rising).

The chief executive of Cumbria county council, Mr Rowland Whitfield, pointed out that the cost of unemployment in the Northern region (Tyne and Wear, Northumberland, Durham, Cleveland and Cumbria) was now a billion pounds a year — "a massive waste of human resources."

But the two MPs have a plan which deserves to be taken seriously. They have been on a study tour of the USA and will shortly publish new proposals aimed at "revitalising private enterprise and wealth creation." That will involve abolishing

petty restrictions on business — those tiresome employment protection measures, health and safety at work acts and a few other statutory provisions besides perhaps — in favour of measures that will help create fresh jobs.

But the implication that New Tech industries will be attracted by a truly free labour market, where private enterprise can let rip unimpeded by petty restrictions, flies in the face of all experience.

Remember Sir Geoffrey Howe's once cherished enterprise zones: the small areas, with tightly drawn boundaries where industries would be spared the burden of rates and petty planning restrictions? In truth, the most successful — Clydebank for instance — have benefited not from this rates moratorium but from substantial sums of government money — factory building, land clearance environmental works — even venture capital channels — through a Scottish or Welsh development agency.

More importantly, the arrival of the big semi-conductor companies in Scotland's silicon Glen can be attributed to the considerable clout of the SDA and the Scottish Office. The co-ordination can only be successful with (more) public money. In reality, an emerging High Tech sector can only be successful with substantial public investment.

That places the English regions at a considerable disadvantage — a fact acknowledged by Mr Heath in his Sunderland speech — although strangely the Hard Right chooses to ignore this glaring anomaly.

The Scottish and Welsh experience suggests public sector venture capital can be a vital ingredient, a stimulus alongside loans from banks

or other venture funds, in the drive to establish new companies.

That should not mean cutting regional spending; rather it could lead to a more effective use of resources.

But even then, in encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit we are only scratching the surface of the problem. With the North still over-dependent on the traditional and declining industries nothing but a significant change in government policy towards capital projects can possibly offer any hope to its 287,519 jobless.

Mr Heath's warnings may have become boringly repetitive to the Chancellor, not to mention Mr Fallon and Mr Merchant. But other Tories who live and work in the region share his concern. "I can see no need for tax cuts," says the Conservative leader in Newcastle city council. "The money could be used to boost public spending."

The former PM has issued his warning. A whole generation is emerging with little prospect of employment; over half the school leavers in the region cannot find work. The looming social tensions, says Mr Heath, are obvious for all to see.

Labour MPs on the right of their party, are more forthright. They warn of civil disorder. Over emotional, over the top? Perhaps. But as the Conservative party may reflect, such levels of unemployment and few job prospects — are unhealthy — any civilised western nation. Democracy has a price.

"The Sixth State of the Region Report by the North of England County Councils Association."

Peter Hetherington is the Guardian's Northern Labour and Political Correspondent.

The power and the boredom—it's a hard job, parliament

Austin Mitchell
Darren Marshall

IN ANY international union of legislators and related trades, British MPs must be the least successful branch. The least adequate research and secretarial assistance, the worst offices, the lowest pay and allowances of any of their counterparts in major advanced industrial democracies, all indicate that in any real test of power, using it to advance self-interest, we have failed.

Whether MPs themselves realise this is another matter. Concepts of what the job is and, therefore, what it involves differ more widely in Britain than in most parliaments. So why not let MPs speak for themselves on their job and what they need to do it by a process of shop floor consultation never tried before.

This was what the All Party Reform Group set out to do. We sent a questionnaire to all MPs, an important exercise to which half of the total membership, two thirds of the backbenchers, replied.

To my surprise, MPs are not unhappy in their work. 13 per cent considered the role of the backbencher to be "very satisfactory", half (more of the Conservatives than Labour) "fairly" satisfactory, only 12 per cent found it "not very" satisfactory and only a mere 4 per cent positively unsatisfactory.

Threequarters felt that the work load is increasing. Yet mechanisation had not gone far to meet it. Under a third had a word processor. However 60 per cent thought the secretarial assistance available to be "adequate", and only 14 per cent found it "seriously" inadequate, while the plea for more research assistance was muted. Only 7 per cent had a full-time researcher and 47 per cent someone part-

time. Nevertheless, two fifths found this "adequate", only a quarter "very inadequate". "Give us the tools and we'll finish the job" is not an overwhelming cry.

Perhaps because no one is very sure of what the job is. "Contributing to the national debate" was viewed as the main job. Spokesman for local interests came second (first among Labour members), and the more traditional role of "checking the executive" third, because it was much lower among Labour priorities than among Conservatives.

The "local ombudsman role," taking up the citizens' grievances against the machine, came fourth and next the related local welfare office role with MPs as overpaid, but undertrained, social workers pursuing social security problems which have been such a growth industry in recent years.

This relegated important traditional roles to lowly placings. Party politician, the

basis on which they were elected and the dominant feature of what is essentially a government by party, was sixth, considered very important by only a fifth of members. Educator and explainer was seventh, and legislator, specialist, even trainee minister was least important of all.

Power may be the consolation prize for impotence but backbenchers do not see it as central to their preoccupations, much as many of them might long for it.

Parliament as the institution in which they have to do their job is viewed with a surprising degree of complacency. Attendance in the House, away from the brief highlight periods, is clearly flagging. Yet members did not see this as being as serious a problem as the commentators. Only two fifths thought it serious. Just over half were not worried.

Select committees, often blamed for falling chamber attendances, were seen as successful. Only a quarter thought they had failed. Sur-

prisingly, more thought the opportunity for private members' bills, potentially a major safety valve, "adequate" than found it unsatisfactory.

Discontent, and it is mild, clusters round the question of topicality, the traditional desire to air issues as they emerge. Prime Minister's questions is "satisfactory" to just over a third, though the only proposal for change which found support was later submission of questions. Ability to raise issues of immediate topical importance was thought "satisfactory", though only "somewhat" and a third were more unhappy, twice as many as thought the procedures "very satisfactory."

The evolution of procedure has turned the Commons from a private, procedural playground into a steamroller driven by the executive. Our members showed no overwhelming objection to this. They did, however, view themselves as being more independent minded, less party ridden and more ready to use their

own judgment than any simple perusal of the voting figures might indicate.

Two-fifths considered MPs less deferential to their parties than they had been 20 years ago with only a fifth considering them more so. With such self-perceptions it is perhaps surprising that when it comes to procedural reform the dominance of the executive is accepted.

Members concentrated on making their own lot more convenient and straightforward. Morning sittings and carry over of bills from one session to another were both rejected. There was, however, overwhelming support for timetabling of bills, a device which would make parliamentary life more predictable but would also enormously strengthen the executive.

It was supported by nearly three-quarters of members and favoured by even higher proportions of the opposition than among the government. The offsetting change was also one more convenient to

members. Just over 60 per cent favoured a fixed ten o'clock adjournment.

A similar proportion favoured a fixed parliamentary year, both devices which would ease what is the major grievance, the late nights — though doing so at the expense of making life more difficult for the executive by imposing deadlines which would curtail its room for manoeuvre.

Clearly some combination of these two proposals, timetabling combined with cut offs, would make the House more efficient and straightforward for most members, though at the expense of eliminating the present ability of the minority of enthusiasts to obstruct and delay.

Parliament would be better organised and perhaps therefore less human and chaotic, but a better place to work in. That seems to be the limit of most members' aspirations.

Austin Mitchell is Labour MP for Great Grimsby.

Aids-memoire for MPs

William Cash

WARNOCK, Gillick, AIDS. Baby Fae: 1985 is going to be a year of inquiry into medicine and medical ethics. So far, each of these issues has been treated as important but separate. In fact, they interlock with profound social and political implications for us all.

On December 20 I tabled an Early Day Motion drawing attention to the link between sexually transmitted diseases, the issue of contraceptive use, and the question of infertility which superficially promoted the consequences of the Warnock Report. The motion called upon Norman Fowler and Kenneth Clarke to promote a campaign through the Health Education Council warning of the danger to health in the current trends of sexual promiscuity. On January 18, the Royal College of Nursing predicted a potential one million cases of AIDS within the next six years.

The problem is urgent — not exclusively on moral grounds but also on social and ethical grounds and on the basis of plain, straightforward common sense: AIDS kills and sexual diseases induce infertility. The prime justification for the Warnock proposals is to cure infertility. How many people realise that often infertility is the direct consequence of abortion or sexual disease? And that abortion, sexual diseases and cancer are strictly the consequence of widespread and early sexual promiscuity, often begun before the age of 16.

In every case of abortion in an unmarried mother there is a significant risk of subsequent infertility and, where it is accompanied by sexual disease, the risk of AIDS or one of the other transmitted diseases. It is now established that AIDS can be transmitted between heterosexuals as well as between homosexuals. Doctors fear that we may be in the incubation period of a massive outbreak of AIDS, for which there is only a limited chance of survival.

What do people want? A campaign for a change in attitude towards sex, however difficult this may seem to achieve, or the death of so many of our young people?

I mentioned the connection between the Warnock Report and the health of the nation. The "justification" for the conclusions of the Warnock Report is infertility. Every one must surely agree, even where it is self-induced, that infertility is a tragedy.

But Warnock is only incidentally about infertility and, for that matter, commercial surrogacy. By deliberate intention or downright negligence, there is an obscuring of the long-term implications of the test tube baby experiments. Many leading experts dispute the necessity for them because there are alternative methods of achieving the elimination of deformities and disabilities.

So long as commercial surrogacy catches the headlines, the real in-depth research will continue. A single Bill to deal with commercial surrogacy is simply not enough and could be seen as a smokescreen unless accompanied by formal commitment to legislation in the other matters concerned.

In the Warnock Debate on November 23, I drew attention to the importance of Parliament considering the long term prospect of a super race served by surrogates. This seemed to me to be a likely consequence of the current experimental programme with the most appalling political consequences.

No licensing authority would have any realistic chance of controlling the inexorable progress down the route mapped out for it by the medical experts. A licence to control is a licence to authorise and the Warnock Committee was hopelessly obscure on the composition of the licensing authority itself and upon the question of medical ethics. Indeed, the Medical Research Council guidelines are themselves wholly inadequate to deal with the current problems arising in this field.

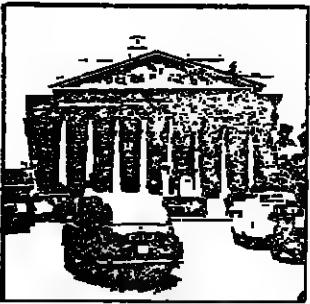
The question of what research is being done, who is doing it and why it is being done, must be fully investigated by Parliament.

The President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Mr M. C. Macnaughton, said that "those who would deny the possibility of preventing these terrible handicaps must bear a heavy responsibility if the recommendation of the Warnock Committee on embryo research up to 14 days is banned." Can he and others who support him present a clear picture of the kind of disaster which would emerge from the research which he recommends?

The responsibility for this lies in Parliament but Parliament must be properly informed. It is to be hoped that every possible support will be given to Enoch Powell's Bill, whose second reading is on February 15.

William Cash is Conservative MP for Stafford.

Now is the logical time for someone to make a late move on freight Dunlop



NOTEBOOK

Edited by
Peter Rodgers

THE late timing of yesterday's interlocking of Dunlop reconstruction is not as bizarre as it looks. Anybody who wanted to get involved would sensibly have

waited until the financial reconstruction document had been published. Dunlop's figures have been a black hole and are still surrounded by uncertainties but at least there is now an up to date set, published 48 hours before the raid on the preference shares. Time enough for corporate finance specialists to digest them.

Of course the stake could have been bought by a friendly party, anxious to preempt anybody else snapping them up — or influence the outcome of the extraordinary meeting next month. This seems unlikely, as the shares were apparently bought from a number of institutions and did not represent a threatening parcel floating round the market.

Another theory is that an angry holder of American Depositary Receipts could be out to block or blackmail at the EGM. But better terms. That doesn't quite stand up, because with such a purely negative motive it

is more than likely that the banks which are in the driving seat would call an attacker bluff. After all, the banks have wrapped a tight security net around Dunlop for themselves anyway, in that they would have the media call on what would be left in a break up, and they haven't been over-enthusiastic in rescuing it anyway.

That leaves the possibility of somebody buying the shares for positive motives though perhaps not friendly to Sir Michael Edwards and the banks. Dunlop's earnings on its remaining businesses are hardly enough to support the debt service. The cost of the shares could be bought for less than £50 million for the shares, but the true cost after taking on the debts would be more like half a billion pounds.

So wonderful ideas for turning round the ruin of Dunlop's BTR or Hanson Trust, make no sense unless other factors such as the use of Dunlop's huge tax losses

come into it. An outsider, independent of the banks, might well make a better job of it anyway. Perhaps this is the story that ought to be true even if it isn't.

Cliffhanger

IT IS notoriously difficult for the government itself to forecast its own borrowing with any accuracy, simply because it is the difference between two very large numbers for revenue and spending. Add in all the baroque little items such as special sales of assets which now adorn the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement and you have a genuinely wayward mistress, as a Minister once called sterling M3.

Yesterday's figures show a PSBR in December which is provisionally estimated at £6.6 billion — £773 million to be precise — which is at the top end of City analysts' recent expectations.

The good news, however, is that the provisional figure for November has been revised downwards, so that the cumulative borrowing figure for the nine months of this financial year is £10 billion.

That is not so wildly out of line with the Government's revised forecast of £8.5 billion. Some analysts, at least, can still nurture a hope or two that it will come in fairly close. The point worth noting is that the PSBR makes the whole exercise something of a cliffhanger.

The best estimate is that about £800 million of the money from accelerated VAT payments by importers came in in December, with the budget forecast implying that there is another £700 million to come. In addition, North Sea revenues should be higher thanks to the falling pound. And mainstream corporation tax and Schedule D income tax is also due be-

tween now and the end of the financial year.

The Treasury will only say two things about the PSBR outcome pending its finalised forecasts. The first is that the £8.5 billion has clearly been overtaken both because the miners' strike has run on beyond Christmas (when it was assumed to end) and because higher interest rates mean higher debt servicing costs.

The second is that no off-setting items apart from those already accounted for in the Autumn forecast have so far come to light. The implication is that the £8.5 billion is going to be exceeded, but we have no official guesses about how much it would, though, be surprising if the Treasury were to point to such factors if they did not account for at least a further £1 billion. And that means that the Treasury's best guess is probably of at least that order of magnitude. Surely no cause for panic on the funding front.

Odd man

THE newspaper industry needs no lessons on how to conduct a campaign. As we report below, the Newspaper Society, representing more than 1,250 paid for and free regional and local newspapers throughout the country, is rising to defend the industry against fears of being VAT-ed in the March Budget.

But the dire disruption to democracy predicted by the Society drawing on the Price Waterhouse study needs a little salt on its tail. The main problem is this: The worst case, what would happen if the Government imposed 15 per cent VAT on both newspaper cover prices, and on the advertisements on which the paid for weeklies in particular depend for up to 90 per cent income.

VAT on ads looks more damaging for the provincial press than for the national

press, whose corporate customers could reclaim the tax. Small local newspapers rely much more on personal advertising.

But it is very much a patchwork, because the economic health and revenue sources of provincial papers varies widely round the regions. As Price Waterhouse pointed out yesterday, this sample of 15 papers is small and "more useful for general results". It does show that what is in effect double taxation for many of them — on cover price and on ads — would be too harsh a measure.

Yet a breakdown of the way Europe treats its press reveals that the vast majority, barring Britain and Greece, impose VAT, at widely varying rates, and variations, while only a minority impose generally low rates if at all on cover price as well. So Britain would look decidedly odd man out of Europe if VAT was imposed both ways.

New stake calls reconstruction into question

Big buy-up of Dunlop shares

By James Ertchman

and Margaret Pagan

A large chunk of crucial preference shares in Dunlop were swiftly picked up in the market yesterday morning only minutes after dealings in the shares resumed after the reconstruction package was unveiled earlier this week.

News of the purchase prompted market speculation that a potential bidder, thought to be the BTR industrial conglomerate, due to launch a bid for the debt-ridden tyre company this morning. Market speculation suggested a price of 35p a share.

At 10 am Hoare Govett, the stockbrokers, bought more than 25 per cent — or 14.7 million — of the preference shares, which would have cost the buyer around £2 million. The preference shares opened

at 30p but are understood to have changed hands at between 30p and 40p.

BTR was widely tipped to be the predator, but there was no comment available from the board last night.

Anyone with 25 per cent of the preference shares has the power to block — or influence — the entire reconstruction package put together by Dunlop and the banks to save the company from collapse. The rescue package must be approved by at least 75 per cent of both the preference and ordinary shareholders at the extraordinary meeting to be held on February 8.

One explanation as to the motive behind yesterday's share purchase is that one of the shareholders, a block of nearly 100 shareholders, who will see their stakes drastically di-

luted in the package, hopes to use the preference stake as a means to scupper the deal or get the terms improved. One such group could be the American owners of at least 27 per cent of Dunlop shares held in BTR.

But City sources close to the Dunlop board said last night that Dunlop believes that the purchase has been carried out as the prelude to an "alternative rescue package".

Dunlop's ordinary shares, which were suspended at 25p, opened at 23p yesterday, far higher than any previous estimates. They gathered pace during the day and finished trading up at 31p. At this price the debt-ridden tyre company is valued at some £45 million. The group's total debts are £435 million.

Dunlop directors last night were locked in meetings with

their banks. They refused to comment on the news of the purchase and the implications that there is now another shareholder in the wings with a substantial chunk of the preference shares.

BTR, which was formerly called the Birmingham Tyre and Rubber Company, moved early out of the disastrous tyre industry and built a huge industrial conglomerate by aggressive takeovers taking it into new fields. Two years ago it bought the Thomas Tilling group more than £600 million. But many of its interests in rubber, engineering and high technology materials would dovetail neatly with many of Dunlop's more profitable manufacturing businesses such as its aviation brakes, consumer sporting goods and a range of domestic foam rubber

Fighting against the fakers

By John Hooper,

Trade Correspondent

THE International Chamber of Commerce yesterday launched a body to deal with the growing problem of product and trademark counterfeiting. It is estimated that industry loses some \$60 billion worldwide each year because of fake goods.

The Counterfeiting Intelligence Bureau, as the new organisation is called, will be based in London. Its director is Mr Eric Ellen, a former chief constable of the Port of London Authority who is also director of ICC's International Maritime Bureau, set up five years ago to fight piracy.

Mr Hans Koenig, the secretary general of the International Chamber of Commerce said: "The CIB marks the first concerted international initiative by the world business community to crack

Concern grows in US over long-term effect of strong dollar

From Alex Brummer

in Washington

Finance Ministers of the big five industrial countries were locked in private discussion yesterday in Washington, amid the first indications that the United States is becoming as concerned as its allies about the strong value of the dollar because of its long-term adverse effects on the American domestic economy.

The ministers, including the Chancellor of the Exchequer Mr Nigel Lawson, had flown into snowbound Washington on Wednesday evening and went straight to work over dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown where the collapse of the pound and the disruption of other European currency markets forced the US on to the defensive.

The concern felt about American inaction on its budget and its impact on the international economy was emphasised yesterday by the news that Mrs Thatcher will be making a second post-election trip to Washington next month when the difficulties in the international economy are expected to rank with arms control at the top of the agenda.

The Chancellor Mr Nigel Lawson, was said to be enjoying considerable support from his European counterparts in efforts to persuade the United States that it must take dramatic action on the dollar. The Reagan Administration is already nervous that the continuing strength of the dollar will harm the nation's industrial base because of the flood of

The goal, according to senior monetary officials closely in touch with the Group of Five meeting, is to establish some form of "enhanced surveillance" — or rules of conduct — for the management of the American and other industrial countries so that their fiscal policies are brought more in line. To make this work will require other industrial countries to apply concentrated political pressure on the Reagan Administration to bring down a budget deficit projected at \$218 billion this year rising to \$250 billion by 1987 — without policy changes.

To achieve this will need more frequent inspections of the US books, setting budgetary targets similar to the monetary targets which IMF economists believe are responsible for reducing inflation in the early 1980s as well as political will. The decision of President Reagan's Administration, as it embarks on its second term, is hardly likely to inspire confidence that this process can work very quickly.

The prospect of these continuing larger budget deficits and little official action to stem them has kept the dollar strong this year despite efforts by the Federal Reserve, America's central bank, to reduce interest rates. It had been hoped within the Administration that the drop in short-term US interest rates would take some upward pressure off the dollar. This tactic having clearly failed there is now some debate within the Administration about whether the time has come to change intervention policy.

Tougher time ahead for tax dodgers

By Mary Bregier

The Inland Revenue is to get tougher with tax dodgers following a successful three-year campaign against small companies and the black economy which led to £140 million of unpaid tax being recovered in 1982.

More staff are to be deployed to chase tax evasion in the light of figures which showed that 90 per cent of companies accounts examined by the Revenue in 1982 needed adjusting, and brought in an extra £138 million of tax.

A report from the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, which has been conducting investigations by the Inland Revenue endorsed the use of extra resources. The MPs also welcomed the Revenue's crackdown on the black economy. "We are pleased to see that the Department has launched a positive attack on the undeclared earnings sector of the black economy." Since 1982 when 70 staff were allocated to uncovering undeclared earnings there has been a steady increase in tax recovery. Unpaid tax recovered amounted to £2.3 million. The unit investigating moonlighters has been expanded steadily because of

its success and additional resources will be kept under review.

The public accounts committee in its report on the three-year build up of investigations, and said they were bound to have a deterrent effect. The MPs also called on the Revenue to consider expanding its investigations into more sophisticated areas of tax evasion. Specialised investigation work which concentrates on stamping out what the Revenue calls "artificial avoidance schemes" is one field where the MPs agreed there might be scope for stepping up action.

The other area is multinational companies which set up arrangements to understate their UK profits to lessen their tax bills. The International tax looking at these schemes known as transfer pricing work is staffed with 25 Revenue employees but has been occupied with work on international tax avoidance legislation. Small unit devoted to plugging tax loopholes exploited by schemes like Rostinners could also be expanded, said the report. "We trust that the Revenue's review of specialised investigation work will look carefully at the need and scope for expanding the capacity of these two important units," said the MPs.

VAT 'could close papers'

Up to 7,000 newspaper jobs could be lost, and more than 100 regional dailies and weekly titles closed if 15 per cent VAT is imposed on newspaper cover prices and advertisement revenue in the March budget, the Government was warned yesterday.

These findings are in a survey carried out by accountants and consultants. Price Waterhouse into the impact of VAT on the regional and local newspaper industry. It is part of a high-powered campaign by the Newspaper Society against possible government moves to change the current zero rating on cover prices and advertisements.

The report is based on a study of the impact of VAT on 14 newspaper groups across the country, picked from the Society's 275 members who publish more than 1,250 paid-for and free newspapers.

The 7,000 job losses would be the most obvious cost-cutting measure to cope with the new financial drain across the country. Journalists, who represent some 7,500 of the total work force, would be worst affected, as news gathering is reduced. The survey also predicts that circulation would drop by 10 per cent, as cover prices rose, advertisements would fall three per cent in volume, company profits be cut sharply, hindering future investment in new technology production processes, and local news coverage would suffer seriously.

It also predicts an acceleration in the trend towards converting paid-for weeklies into free distribution sheets, with lower editorial content, and a further concentration of ownership, benefiting the larger and stronger groups with interests outside newspapers.

Mr Tim Morris, president of the Newspaper Society, said yesterday: "The picture the study paints confirms all our worst fears. We could see 12 or 13 dailies disappear, and another 90 titles."

The role of local newspapers in defending democracy would also be seriously weakened, he said. "But for the paid-for daily and weekly press, who else is going to check on local authorities' power, the courts or the trades unions? We are essential cornerstones."

Output at four-year high

Christopher Huhne

Economics Editor

Manufacturing output rose by nearly 1 per cent in November to record its highest level for four years, according to Central Statistical Office figures yesterday.

The resilience of factory output, which increased by 1.3 per cent taking the last three months compared with the previous three-month period, rose in the consumers' spending of 1.9 per cent in the fourth quarter and 2.2 per cent over the year.

The index of the output of the production industries as a whole, which adds energy to the manufacturing figures, shows a small fall of 0.3 per cent in November as North Sea production fell back from October's high point.

The increase taking three months over the previous three months, a more reliable guide, shows a rise of 2.3 per cent in industrial production as a whole with a slight increase in

coal output from working pits.

Recent comparisons are not much affected by the coal dispute, which is estimated to have reduced the level of production by around 34 per cent in both the latest and previous three-month periods. But the fall over the year is 0.2 per cent, as the loss of coal output offset growth elsewhere.

The rise in consumers' spending, which includes vehicle sales and spending on utilities like telephones as well as high street spending, was particularly marked in the fourth quarter after a year which had previously seen little change. It reflects rising real incomes and some rise in employment, the effects of which have more than offset lost miners' spending.

The apparent upward trend in manufacturing, which grew by 2.6 per cent over the year to the last three months, may in part be due to the steady fall in the pound, which particularly benefits trading sectors.

However, the figure for October and November include a revision upwards by 0.5 per cent and 1 per cent respectively to allow for what the CSO calls "understatement in recent provisional figures".

Confirmation of the trend must await further data, but recent figures from the Department of Employment tend to confirm the CSO's optimism since the average monthly increase in manufacturing employment is put at 8,000 over the three months to November.

Manufacturing industry has been little affected by the coal dispute, with output being reduced by perhaps half a per cent. The industries which have been growing fastest are electrical engineering, which includes computers and so forth, and chemicals.

The average level of manufacturing output in the last three months is 8.5 per cent higher than the trough in the first quarter of 1981 but still 10.5 per cent below the peak in the second quarter of 1979.

Abbey Life shows an increase

By our Financial Staff

Abbey Life, the UK assurance group which is being prepared for a possible public flotation later this year, yesterday unveiled figures for 1982 which show an increase in premium income from £311 million to £383 million.

The group, owned by ITC, increased single premium sales by one third and notched up increases of between 75 per cent and 122 per cent in Ireland and Germany. The rapid expansion of Abbey was cited by ITC on Wednesday as one of the reasons for seeking a sale of a minority stake.

ITC could probably raise around £100 million from the public offer for a quarter of Abbey Life. Yesterday's results from the group show that the unit trust management side has performed particularly well with lump sum investments increasing from £14.1 million to £26.3 million.

Self employed pensions rose by 70 per cent to £19.4 million and directors' pensions were up by 27 per cent to £7.5 million. Unit linked single premium life and pension figures increased by six per cent.

8,000 jobs vanish in two weeks

By David Simpson,

Business Correspondent

A further 1,350 redundancies in the UK were announced yesterday, taking the total of jobs to be lost in British industry to the first two working weeks of 1983.

The UK computer manufacturer, ICL, recently acquired by STC, is to prune its workforce by 650 while 722 jobs are to be lost at Esso's Mossmorran petrochemical plant in Fife.

The redundancies in Fife come about as the construction of the ethane-cracking plant nears completion, and at least 2,000 men employed on the site are expected to be laid off by the summer.

The ICL job losses, all on the group's manufacturing side, stem from a comprehensive reorganisation of its production facilities. About 470 jobs will go at Letchworth in Hertfordshire where the group's smaller metal component making factory is to be closed all together.

The balance of the redundancies will go at K3dprove near Stoke-on-Trent and at Ashton-under-Lyne in the Greater Manchester region. In addition, ICL is to cease manu-

facturing operations in the US, switching production of its Distributed Resources System micro computer to Letchworth from Utica in New York State, prompting 300 job losses at the US site.

ICL, which opened discussions with its unions on the latest round of job cuts yesterday, said that it hoped some could be accounted for through natural wastage but that due to changing skill requirements, a significant number would be through redundancies.

The US operation is being closed down partly because the group believes it sensible to base all manufacture of its DRS system at a single plant and partly because the weakness of sterling has made it cost-effective to ship from the UK to the US market, rather than manufacture locally.

The new job losses will mean that ICL's total workforce has fallen from 33,000 in 1980, before the group encountered the financial problems which forced a government rescue loan guarantee, to only 21,000 while the number of workers employed in its manufacturing activities will have more than halved over the same period to 3,400.

A catch in the fishing policy

By Rosemary Collins

Fish stocks in EEC waters are being depleted because the operation of the Common Fisheries Policy is dictated by political expediency rather than scientific fact.

Even the over-generous catch quotas agreed by EEC politicians anxious to please their fishing constituents are inadequately checked and enforced, the House of Lords Select Committee on the EEC claims today.

The committee calls for tighter control and a stern eye for scientific evidence, and warns that the entry into the EEC of Spain could push the EEC over the brink into total

chaos. Spanish fishermen should not be under any circumstances be allowed to fish in the EEC waters from which they have been excluded since the extension of fishing limits in 1976, except for fish species not covered by current quotas, the committee insists.

Evidence brought before the committee convinced its members that allowable fish catches have routinely exceeded scientific recommendations, based on the need to conserve stocks, because of pressure from fishermen's organisations.

Conservation needs have taken second place to the need to help the industrial fishing fleet, primarily important to

Denmark within the EEC. The Danish fleet currently lands around 1.1 million tonnes of fish industrially processed fish each year.

The Lords committee accepts that there is no case for a complete ban on industrial fishing, since it exploits species unsuitable for human consumption, but demands that its scale be regulated. Industrially processed fish, part of the diet of human consumption fish, and the small mesh nets used in industrial fishing necessarily catch substantial quantities of young human consumption fish. Both factors have repercussions on fish stocks.

Symptomatic of the apparent lack of enthusiasm at high EEC levels for enforcing the CFP rules is the continued delay in issuing log books to fishermen, the committee believes.

The log books were to have been issued by inspectors could verify catches from a log kept in standard form by all EEC fishermen. It is now more than a year since the books were issued and there is no sign of them. "If the commission take so long to bring in uniform operations which are so essential a feature of the policy, doubts are bound to be cast on their competence and on their resolve."

Keeping cable

Cable operators should concentrate first on serving domestic markets and customers with screen-based entertainment and services, and only in the longer-term build on products for business and commerce, a major conference on Cabling the City was told yesterday.

Mr Michael Storey, general manager of Westminster Cable, most promising of the first 11 pilot cable franchise areas said that the industry has to build on its sole de facto monopoly, supplying video communications to a residential market,

Warburg's Fleet role

By Maggie Brown

Warburg Investment Management announced yesterday that it effectively controls a 15.05 per cent stake in Fleet Holdings, publishers of the Daily Express and Sunday Express, and tipped for a takeover bid.

This large managed stake places Warburg in the position of power-broker, should United Newspapers, with a near 19 per cent holding under its belt after buying Mr Robert Maxwell's stake, decide to seek control.

The 12.7 million shares are held in a range of funds advised or run by Warburg investment managers, and includes a 5 per cent stake Newspaper,

managed on behalf of the British Broadcasting Corporation Pension Fund (whose trustees in total have a 6.58 per cent stake).

Warburg Investment say the holding has been built up over the last three years, since Fleet was floated off as a separate communications group at 20p. The shares have been added to over the years, and the funds are showing "one hell of a profit".

Warburg's managers 27 billion of investment funds, including locally some of Fleet's own pension funds. It does not have a large day-to-day interest in United Newspapers.

The cautious approach



SMALL BUSINESS

HARVEY EAST is not the sort of man to give up easily. A few months after his Devon-based jewellery firm went into liquidation three years ago, he was busy setting up another company in the same business in a former bakery on an industrial estate at Bude in North Cornwall.

He was a lot wiser the second time around and has applied to the new firm many of the lessons he learned the hard way from the failure of Aurifex, the original company he had set up with a partner.

The new company, Dewn Ltd, also in the jewellery business, is currently achieving an annual turnover of over £100,000.

The main lesson East learned was not to put all his eggs in one basket. Aurifex, which relied on making watch bracelets and was heavily dependent on the American market, when the US market failed to live up to its promise, the company found itself in a difficult position. East decided to diversify, and the firm now makes a wide variety of jewellery, from earrings and bracelets to lighters and expensive pens. Many of their products are sold through the most prestigious jewellery firms in the country and find their way into the possession of royalty and the wealthy.

When East and his two partners, who had all been unable to find another job after the collapse of Aurifex,

Decan already makes both tooling for the jewellery industry and finished products, but East is determined to break into other fields and has had some success in doing so. Surprisingly, however, his main hope for diversification is the electronics industry, which has not responded very enthusiastically to his approaches.

Another lesson that East has learned is not to allow his company to grow too fast. Aurifex grew to 40 employees before it collapsed. Dewn, which has a staff of eight full-time employees and several part-timers. The former bakery it took over at Bude is bursting at the seams with machinery and it would be logical for East to move to bigger premises where the company could expand with ease.

East and his fellow directors have decided to err on the side of caution, however, and have decided to stay put until there are clear indications that the market can sustain any ambitious expansion plans.

"This year we plan to hold the same turnover we did last year," says 54-year-old East. "It will give us a bit of a chance to capitalise on what we've achieved."

When East originally set up Dewn he was also cautious to build up slowly and keep his overheads at a manageable level. He was helped in this aim by the fact that two former colleagues from Aurifex joined him in the venture. They are 42-year-old Leslie Straker and 43-year-old Mike Larrett, who are directors with a 20 per cent stake in Dewn. The three men make an ideal team. East designs the jewellery. Straker manufactures the tooling and Larrett is in charge of production.

Because of their combined talents, the three directors did not need to hire much skilled labour to launch Dewn. They did take on some



The directors at a machine for pressing ear studs

tool-makers, but the rest of the workforce were inexperienced and had to be trained in the intricacies of jewellery making. "We looked for people with the right mentality for this particular trade," says Larrett. "It's a problem trade, because the work is very fiddly and requires a lot of patience."

The three men's wives work in the business, helping to close the overheads. As part of Dewn's diversification policy, it now makes a wide variety of jewellery at Bude, from earrings and bracelets to lighters and expensive pens. Many of their products are sold through the most prestigious jewellery firms in the country and find their way into the possession of royalty and the wealthy.

When East and his two partners, who had all been unable to find another job after the collapse of Aurifex,

decided to have a second go at running a business, they approached some of their old customers. One major customer, anxious not to lose a good supplier, agreed to buy plant from the liquidator to set up Dewn. It also took a 40 per cent equity stake in the new company.

With this backing behind them, the three men approached the local branch of Barclays Bank for financial support. They were offered £12,000 under the Government's guaranteed loan scheme.

So as not to overstretch themselves, the three directors decided to confine production initially to tooling for the jewellery industry. They started with five customers from the old days, but they only supply two of those today. Attempting to broaden the base, they sent out calendars advertising the

company, but these brought in no new customers. Gradually, however, customers started to build up.

Intent on diversification, East made a tour of electronic companies in the so-called Silicon Valley adjoining the M4, but he got little response. Dewn has at last managed to get business outside the jewellery trade, however. A Devonian chemical firm approached it to make sample capsules. The company was buying them at great expense from Switzerland. Not only could Dewn make the capsules a lot more cheaply, they are of such good quality that the chemical firm is now succeeding in selling them back to Switzerland.

East sees the company's future increasingly in terms of supplying small batch components, which the major manufacturers do not find it worth their while making. "Our set-up is ideally suited

for that market," he says. "We can make the simple tools and we can make the components for them if they need us to."

But it is the three directors' in-depth knowledge of the jewellery trade that is likely to be their main passport to success. Says East: "The jewellery trade by tradition is a handicraft industry. What we do is mechanise it so the manufacturers can go to volume production with much lower overheads."

However well it succeeds, Dewn can never expect to enjoy a really high profile. Most of the products it makes are for prestigious companies who put their own brand names on the jewellery. Dewn, which does not market any of its products directly, has to be content to remain in the shade while big name jewellery firms sparkle in the limelight.

David Oates

The Sunday debate

FORUM

IN SPITE of the detailed analyses which filled all national dailies on the subject of Sunday trading, the lack of a true sensitivity to the industry from the various commentators shone through. Selfish, intellectual and consumer orientated arguments have masked the crucial social implications of the legislation which will make possible the Sunday "free for all" that will surely ensue.

I do not even intend to enter the moral debates, i.e. Lords Day observance, the sanctity of labour etc. There are other realities which are constantly overlooked which will, unless confronted, leave us with a legacy which could cause us regrets for many years to come.

We have known for some time that Sunday trading laws have been flouted, mainly by the corner shop independents but increasingly by non-food multiples.

How much more have people really wanted and not been able to obtain by all shops not being open on a Sunday? It was not actually the clamour from the con-

sumer which has called for the alteration of the law but rather the need to clean up the many anomalies.

Consumer spending is not going to increase as a result of any relaxation. There will simply be a further redistribution of the way in which spending is carried out.

Such has become the power of the multiples whose key personnel sit at the base of the shopkeepers' ladder, that the very little that has been paid to the micro and micro efforts of their unbusinessed progress.

Disregard all statistics, notably those flanked upon our TV screens each Friday, that multiple retailers create employment. Logic must tell one that the shopkeepers have simply transferred their loyalties from other shops and the up-to-date technology now employed to the multiples, labour rather than increase it.

Of even greater significance is the effect on the total infrastructure of the local economy. After the establishment of multiple how many local builders, plumbers, accountants and solicitors, etc. are employed.

Nor is it sufficient to point to the fact that there is still a healthy trade in the purchase

and sale of independent retail businesses. We have long known that the number of these are unenviable from the outset, are being backed by those who have little interest in anything other than the property collateral.

Last but not least is the real social hardship that this present trend is likely to produce. Not only in our rural areas but also urban neighbourhood communities there are large, albeit minority, groups of people who have to depend on the local shops for their purchases.

Would it not be the simplest of compromises to say "yes, let us in principle deregulate Sunday trading, but control it on the basis of a license as determined by local authority representatives." Any shop employing less than five persons would automatically receive a license to trade whether they wish to or not. Any shop employing more than five persons could receive a license providing that the full implications of their Sunday trading on the local community and its social infrastructure are considered.

John White

Back to school

rather different from other bidders, who planned to demolish the school and build houses. He instead saw it as a centre with twin benefits for the area.

The local councils involved proved helpful and granted planning permission but none of the major banks showed interest in the purchase. A loan finance for the purchase, eventually he made contact with a City finance house, TCB, and Jan Balkwill, area organiser for the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas, all the more agents of England's rural development agency, the Development Commission.

Between them a financial package was put together, including a long term loan of £40,000 from CoSIRA. The sale was completed in September of last year, with West Oxford district council buying some of the land for a car park.

Since then what was Spendlove School has been transformed into the Spendlove Centre by a new company formed by Mr Hanks and his partners. The school hall and

adjacent rooms have become a large entertainment centre being used regularly by a badminton club and an old people's social club as well as for dancing and other parties.

The school changing rooms have become the headquarters of the local amateur football club and a swimming club is planning to take over the school pool.

Perhaps the major asset retained from Spendlove, however, is the 30,000 square feet of well lit, modern classrooms. Three floors have been remodelled to form workshops and offices.

More than half of the space has already been taken by businesses, including a dentist who wanted both an extra surgery and a workshop for a dental technician and a concert promoter attracted by the 400 seat hall.

Computer hardware and software companies are also now moving into the premises and it is expected that most of the remaining business premises will go to hi-tech firms. Tenants take premises on a rent-and-service basis on a three-year lease or short licence.

The pattern is one which has obvious advantages elsewhere in towns and villages with substantial redundant buildings. What is needed is the entrepreneurs to set the process moving.

Needs review

SIGNPOST

THE SMALL Business Bill will be introduced for second reading in the House of Commons today by Michael Grylls, MP, who is also chairman of the Small Business Bureau, the Conservative Party's lobby group.

"Our objective in this Bill is to protect the interests of the owner-managed business against abuse both from big business and the over complications of government legislation," says Mr Grylls.

Another Conservative MP, William Cash, says the Bill will place a duty on every Secretary of State to report annually to Parliament on what they have done to simplify legislation. "It will be a rolling review by every government department. It will be a constant review, too, of the practical needs of smaller firms."

An unusual aspect of the programme is the Scimitar innovation technique developed at MBS by Dr Tudor Richards. So far this approach has developed 2,500 new product ideas, more than 100 provisional patents, and 325 market tested new products.

The programme is open to firms with under 200 employees and who are within an hour's drive of Manchester. Further information can be obtained from Dr George Lester, Manchester Business School, Booth Street West, Manchester M15 6PB, telephone (061) 273 8222, extension 319 or 322.

A NEW part-time programme, Firm 50, is being launched by the Greater Manchester Economic Development Corporation to help people committed to starting a new business or those who have recently left a job to trade.

The programme is free of charge to suitable applicants; in addition all those accepted will qualify for a research grant to test their business concept and some may be eligible for income support. The programme is provided by Manchester Business School in association with the Greater Manchester Development Corporation and is promoted by GMEDC.

THE ANNUAL meeting and one day conference of the Scottish Association of Small Business Education will be held on February 8 and 9 at the Scottish Enterprise Foundation, Stirling University, Stirling, Scotland.

The conference will consider the latest initiatives in teaching and training for enterprise for use in schools, colleges, adult institutions and universities. More than 60 teachers and trainers involved in existing and proposed courses on small business management attended from all over Scotland.

Further details can be obtained from the SASBE conference organiser, Scottish Enterprise Foundation, Stirling University, Stirling, FK9 4LA. Telephone (0786) 731711.

Three seminars for those interested have been arranged on January 31 in Rochdale, February 6 in Manchester, and February 7 in Bolton. The programme starts in April.

Further information can be obtained from Pam Shipsh, Greater Manchester Development Corporation, Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester M1 4DD, telephone (061) 236 4411.

THE closing date for entries to the Livewire scheme in Scotland and Northern Ireland which aims to encourage young people to create their own jobs is now approaching. The final date being January 31. The UK is organising the scheme in both cases, helped in Northern Ireland by the Action Resource Centre.

The basis of the Livewire scheme is that each young person between the ages of 16 and 25 with a business idea is referred to an individual adviser who helps to develop the idea to the point where it might be possible to start a business.

MIDLAND Bank is offering free business banking services to anyone taking part in the enterprise allowance scheme operated by the Manpower Services Commission.

The accounts, whether in credit or overdraft, will be operated free of charge for all normal banking services during the 52 week period of the enterprise allowance. Interest on any borrowing and other specific services will be charged at normal commercial rates.

The scheme is designed to help unemployed people create their own jobs by setting up in business. The government recently allocated a further £225 million to enable the scheme to continue until March 1985. Successful applicants receive an allowance of £40 a week for the first year in business.

A secondary element of the scheme is a competition where the overall best idea will be awarded a £1,000 package of start up equipment or services and a trophy, with prizes for runners-up.

Entry leaflets can be obtained from job centres, libraries, community centres, schools, colleges, enterprise trusts, Trustee Savings Bank branches in Scotland or Ulster Bank branches in Northern Ireland, and from Shell filling stations.

MANPOWER Services Commission and Manchester Business School are collaborating in a new initiative to provide trained managers for four months, at MSC expense, to firms wanting new business opportunities.

Course tutor, George Lester, says that host companies will get a portfolio of new product ideas and new business areas to explore. Another feature is that unemployed managers get the

THE 30th world conference of the International Council for Small Business will be held in Montreal, Canada, on June 16-19 on the theme of "small business in the entrepreneurial era".

Further information can be obtained from the Secretariat, 30th ICBS World Conference, Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales, 5355 Decelles Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3T 1V8.

edited by Clive Woodcock

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

PRIVATE HEALTH CLINIC

We are looking for business-minded people to develop and own a new health centre. The clinic is situated in a prime location in the heart of the city. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of patients. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

Calderdale, West Yorkshire

SUBSTANTIAL BRICK-BUILT

With modern attached garage, stone walls, and a large garden. The property is situated in a quiet residential area. The owner is offering the property for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

High profit margins - no stock. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

YORKSHIRE

Existing Plant Fleet & Freehold

The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

Motor Brokers Ltd

The United Kingdom's largest motor brokerage and personal car importer. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

INTERNATIONAL OFFSHORE COMPANY FORMATION

ALL MAJOR CENTRES

Full administrative services, including: company formation, tax planning, and more. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

TRAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

SELECTIVE TENDERING

The Council is reviewing its list of firms from which selections of work are made. The list will be divided into sections according to size of contract. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

CITY OF MANCHESTER

CITY ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT

TENDERS are invited on a schedule of rates basis for the undermentioned items of work required during the twelve months' period ending March 31, 1985. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

Hugill & Co.

London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Perth, Stirling, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Perth, Stirling.

Provide financial advice to independent businesses - especially in the areas of: business development, loans and capital from the Government's Loan Guarantee Scheme. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

OWN YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Well established and successful company, insulating over 100 lots per week with its blown fibre warm glass fibre system, is seeking for the first time suitable licensed installers in all parts of the UK except the East Midlands. No experience required. The right attitude and willingness to work hard are essential. No personal selling. Loft insulation is a government supported industry which is about to witness an explosion in growth due to a dramatic increase in properties qualifying for grants. Ability to fund modest stocks of material required. A substantial volume of work will be handed over to demonstrate the viability of this very profitable licence.

For a preliminary discussion write quoting Tel. No. to: K.H.L. Unit 2, Wellington Street, Stapleford, Nottingham. or Tel. 0602 593844 or 0302 674482 (North).

VERY LIMITED OPPORTUNITY

Offering to invest in a profitable business. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

REMORTGAGES

Realise the capital tied up in your home. Building society rates. For Home Office approved mortgage brokers. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

TELEX

NO SUBSCRIPTION

Telephone: 01-318 1235

WORKINGTON Enterprise Zone

Clearance lines. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

YOUR OWN SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

There are already over 80 highly successful Auto-Smart Distribution enjoying the rich rewards, and the personal satisfaction of running their own business. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

GET RICH in YOUR SPARE TIME

Irish company with a very high profit patented product expanding into U.K. require a limited number of people to exploit the vast potential of this very successful unit on the British market.

MINIMUM INVESTMENT £1,000.

For further details write to: METAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LTD., 19 Magennis Place, Dublin 2, Ireland.

AGENTS and DISTRIBUTORS £500 A DEAL

We are about to launch the most exciting and revolutionary new concept in mobile food units ever seen in the UK. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

CONTINUOUS CASH PROFITS

I discovered a product costing £15, which makes a profit of £15. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

PROFIT CAN BE MADE IN VAN HIRE

Within 3 years, I now own the largest Van Hire Fleet in Britain. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

BUSINESS FINANCE

Price offer: Discretionary under establishment in Norway. The business is profitable and has a waiting list of customers. The owner is offering the business for sale at a very attractive price. For more details, contact: [Name], [Address], [Phone].

Matthew Engel reports from Madras

India fight back to halt Foster's frolic

CRICKET

There was a moment yesterday when India were 22 for three in their second innings, still 358 runs behind England, and it looked as though they were so ashamed about their performance that they wanted to give up and get away as soon as possible.

The moment passed and by the end of the fourth day they were still in with a chance of saving the fourth Test, thanks to two innings that matched and in some respects even surpassed England's batting earlier. Even if the match is lost, Mohinder Amarnath and Muhammad Azharuddin have done much to restore the reputation of Indian cricket.

With a day to go India were 246 for four, still 134 behind after England had declared at 652 for seven, the fifth highest total in English Test history. Amarnath was out for 95 but Azharuddin was still going, 103 not out. In a match of batting records he has become the fourth player in history to score a century in both his first and second Test matches.

More important than that, it was a glittering century, adding further evidence that a major new batting force has come amongst us. Of the 50-odd players, who started with centuries, a number vanished without trace. Alas, poor R. E. Shodhan and G. J. Coster. The only players to get a century in their first two before yesterday were Ponsford, Kallicharran and Doug Walters. Paul Lawrence Rowe who made two centuries on his debut, Azharuddin is walking with the greats.

He could hardly have begun amid a bigger crisis. England, as expected, had batted on, but only for five overs and 41 runs, in which time Edmonds slogged happily and got out and Gower was out rather less happily. The total of 682 surpassed anything scored in a Test in India and anything England have scored since 1838-39.

Three of the four scores England failed to beat all came in 15 months of the front wickets and Neville Chamberlain: 908 for seven in Hutton's Test against Australia at the Oval in 1938; 688 for eight at Trent Bridge the same summer; and 664 for five in the timeless Test at Durham, the last following day. There was also the 549 at Kingston in 1929-30.

Gower has never been much of a history man. A couple more balls and this England might have been in the place. But it was huge enough. The question remaining was whether India's batsmen could or would react well enough to force a draw. Our friendly neighbourhood bookmaker, who does know his history, quoted an Indian win at 50/1. And suddenly India were playing kamikaze again. There were no thoughts of blocking. Gavaskar was off the mark first ball. Srikanth was square-cutting and missing in the first over. And he found Gavaskar was gone, having been drawn forward by a Foster delivery that rushed away from his bat to first slip. Gavaskar began the slowest trudge back to a dressing room I think I have ever seen. He was hit by isolated boos. Among ageing cricketers, it is usually not the eyes or the legs that go first, but the will.

Two overs later, Vengsarkar was out flicking Foster off his



BOY WONDER... Azharuddin on the way to his century

like seeing Santa strike a six-year-old. Foster did for Amarnath at the end, or rather Amarnath did, hitting his century, looking once too often and being nicely caught by Cowans. That was Foster's fourth wicket of the innings, and his 10th of the match, the first time he has ever done that.

If three of yesterday's four were not quite as worthy as his first innings six, he deserved his success. Whenever he has looked like taking 10 in a match for Essex, John Lever has got in the way. Here there was less opposition. Cowans never bowled after his first, indifferent, spell. The ball was starting to turn, but only 34 runs were being made, a steady enough line to make it matter.

Once Amarnath played him dangerously near Cowans at wide mid-off and a more flexible man might have caught it. Then Edmonds had a very big shout for a bat-pad catch against Azharuddin off the last of the day. But so India's chances of staying at 1-1 in the series. The best of a remarkable test match might still be to come.

But he was quite outdone by Azharuddin, still only 21 and a proud possessor of a new scooter. He murdered Pocock; with six fields on the on-side, he found time and room to keep striking the ball off the back foot through the off-side gaps, then play lovely wristy paddle shots down to the boundary. His technique might stand up to a green top at Nottingham or Colchester (his new partner in history, Walters, kept failing in England) but on these pitches, he is a lovely batsman.

Pocock had a bad day all round. When Amarnath was hit on the back leg swooping and with reasonable grounds, Pocock was convinced he was out, the umpire's rejection was followed by a display of petulance worthy of an Australian fast bowler. It was a bit

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SOCCER

David Lacey

Eastern promise in draw

THE POSTPONEMENT of three of the four Milk Cup fifth-round ties scheduled for this week meant that yesterday's draw for the semi-finals merely increased the confusion. The competition remains in a state of frozen hypothesis but at least we know now that there could be an all-East Anglian semi-final or an all-London final.

Normally it takes a blatant force to the top of the milk but this time a canny has at least broken part of the ice. Norwich City, the only club through to the last four following Wednesday's win at Grimsby, face the intriguing prospect of meeting Ipswich over two legs for a place at Wembley.

For this to happen Ipswich must beat Queens Park Rangers at Portman Road, hardly a foregone conclusion given the Suffolk team's poor pre-Christmas form. Norwich lost at Ipswich on New Year's Day but knocked them out of the Milk Cup away from home last season when Channon scored the only goal of their fourth-round tie.

Another Norfolk-Suffolk confrontation would hold more intense interest and in any case Norwich would prefer to avoid QPR's artificial pitch if they can. Given the enduring good forms of Deehan and Channon, Norwich must be favoured to reach Wembley at this stage.

Much the same goes for Watford, who with Blissett in the starting form which helped them to reach the League Cup semi-finals in 1979, ought to defeat Sunderland in the fifth round at Vicarage Road. If this happens they will play Chelsea or Sheffield Wednesday in the semi-finals. Graham Taylor's team have beaten both in the First Division this season and are one of only three sides to have won at Stamford Bridge.

Then again, Sheffield Wednesday look the team most likely to upset the more confident predictions and if they can retain their form through the freeze they may not only end Chelsea's run but reach a Wembley final for the first time since 1964.

THE FLURRY of postponements of tomorrow's League games because of the cold weather is expected to turn into an avalanche today when several morning inspections are made across the country and it looks as if Liverpool and Coventry are likely to be two of the few venues to be hosting games.

Yesterday the day's most attractive fixture, the First Division match between second-placed Tottenham and leaders Everton at White Hart Lane was called off, along with Nottingham Forest's game with Sheffield Wednesday and Sunderland's. Tonight's games at Southampton and Swansea are off.

Undersell heating at Anfield, where Liverpool entertain Norwich and at Highfield Road, where Coventry play Aston Villa, should guarantee some action. But both clubs have warned that snowfalls pose a threat, mainly through making the tarring and open seating unsafe.

Cheshire hopes that, having thrown out the Stamford Bridge pitch with industrial heaters, they can hold off the frost with straw so that they can play some football.

Borke has also criticised the selection committee — which players are not allowed to do. That alone puts him in line for a fine.

West Indies extended their winning run in the World Series Cup one-day competition to six matches with a comfortable 65-run victory over Sri Lanka in Sydney. Replying to West Indies 267 for three from 50 overs — the highest score of the series — the Sri Lankans scored 205 for five, largely due to Roy Dias, who became the first Sri Lankan to pass 1,000 runs in limited over matches by scoring 65 not out off 99 balls. Two wickets went to Michael Holding, giving him 104 one-day wickets and besting Dennis Lillee's previous record of 103.

The ECB cannot now sit back and do nothing about Border's statement, which in any event broke a confidence. He has also openly criticised the Board. Border also said that the team would share the fine which has to be paid by this afternoon.

Certain members of the side are known to be unhappy about this, and one who does not want to be named said that he will not contribute a single cent. Border also said he wanted the £300 to be paid to the Ethiopian Relief Fund rather than to the ECB, a non-profit-making body.

Fred Bennett, the ABC chairman, finds himself in a difficult position. He was never a great support of Hughes as captain and will

Robert Armstrong

Clubs ponder over new TV deal

Football League chairman the duopoly enjoyed by the television companies. But Sir Arthur said: "It would not be in the best interests of the game if one channel had football all to itself."

Though Sir Arthur declined to go into detail, it is thought that the new deal for three years, is worth \$3.5 million — a 48 per cent increase on the current agreement which runs out next May. The number of live matches would rise from 10 to 16 next season, building up to a total of 28 by 1988. Live regional football would be brought back and more lower division games televised.

Sir Arthur gave a qualified welcome to the proposed increase in the number of matches for transmission. "We have one thing to sell, live football, while the TV companies have a waning interest in recorded highlights. We want regional coverage, we want to keep Match of the Day on television like football on radio."

The alternative idea of putting live football up for sale to the highest bidder was vigorously rejected by some of the First Division clubs who resent

television football, remarked after the meeting that his "warning of a match on TV every week was being repeated." Dunnett added that football was still being sold for too little to the television companies.

Another dissenter was the chairman, Irving Scholar, who believes that football is a "great product that should be sold much better." Scholar believes that football should be sold more competitively to the highest bidder, as athletics has done with the BBC. "Many of us are not happy about this deal," he said.

The other main item under consideration was the new contract worth \$11 million a year with the pools companies. However, the deal failed to produce the expected motion picture of the floor, with criticism of the amount accepted. None voted against the contract.

Earlier in the day an official meeting of First and Second Division chairmen organised by the Fulham chairman, Ernie

Patrick Barclay on Liverpool's latest trophy failure

Problems in the air for Fagan

Joe Fagan returned from Liverpool's defeat of Tottenham like a man who had just gone 15 rounds with himself. All the Anfield staff think about, one often hears, is the next match. But the normally cheerful manager, had much to think about. He had his first Liverpool win in the early hours of the night.

The Super Cup, which Juventus had taken by virtue of a Torrivall-Dean display on ice from Fagan and Bouček, did not matter. Liverpool are getting into unfamiliar mortal habits such as sustaining injuries — Lawrenson's recurrent hamstring trouble sent him to a specialist yesterday — and seeing trophies slip away.

Since the departure of Souček to Italy in the wake of European Cup triumph last summer, Fagan's side have lost contests for the Charity Shield, the World Club Championship and the Super Cup. Their fingers have been pruned from the Milk Cup. They trail in the championship race.

To put matters in perspective, they could still conceivably win the League, FA Cup and the European Cup. But they need more than a few more goals than those which have flown in the meantime. However, Fagan is labouring under the task of explaining an accumulation of indifferent performances.

Initially Fagan ventured the opinion that the improved attendances at Anfield were due to appreciation of Liverpool's play, results notwithstanding. This was rubbish, of course, a proper attendance partly out of loyalty and partly out of curiosity.

In a vintage year for books about Scottish football two others deserve mention. Scottish History from 1867 to the Present Day (Kevin Brown, Edinburgh, £4.95 paperback, £9.95 hardback) is self-explanatory but beautifully done — a must and an all-time bargain at the paperback price.

Across the Great Divide (John Wilkie, Mainstream Publishing, £4.95) is a history of professional football in Dundee, where two clubs exist, less than 100 yards from each other. It is a last, weary, observed, page and recommend it if only on the grounds that Dundee is probably the least known city of its size in Britain, soccer-wise and otherwise. As an Englishman, or even a Glaswegian, to name the only British city outside Glasgow which has produced two separate European Champions Cup semi-finalists, and the odds are he will look blank. He has not read his Wilkie.

FAGAN: Still missing Souček

But what else could he have said? We aren't half the team without him, he might have said. "We've been hit by injuries the way we never have been before. We deserve sympathy in that respect. But we've made some dubious buys. We've played Alan Smith, especially out of position, which hasn't helped, and shown too much faith in Phil Neal who should never have been made captain at 33." No, Fagan could hardly have said that.

This was another largely welcome week, with a £150,000 cheque from Turin being set off by reports that Liverpool would be the club for the Oldham youngster Wayne Harrison. There was also the taming of Rush by Juventus, which must have knocked £1 million off the value of the club when the transfer embargo is lifted next year.

My own enduring view, nevertheless, is that there are degrees of crisis and that Liverpool, for all their unfamiliarity with the problem, are better equipped than most to recover. Though Bankrupt supplies spellbinding Platini were merrily on the difficult surface — Platini played his first goal in the 77th minute, and he did not settle for 20 minutes all night — the match would have taken a different course had Wark not uncharacteristically missed an open goal before half-time.

The one-off nature of the tie also helped Juventus who were relatively free of pressure. In the second half and could afford to wait for the second goal, which Bankrupt supplied 11 minutes from time. If these two sides meet again, over two legs in the European Cup, the observer would not bet 50/1 against

Charles Burgess

UEFA keep Celtic waiting

Celtic were left on tenterhooks last night waiting for UEFA to announce what punishment, if any, they will receive following their turbulent European Cup-Winners Cup tie against Rapid Vienna at Old Trafford five weeks ago.

The Scottish club have yet to be told of the decision made yesterday by UEFA's disciplinary committee in a hearing which took place at a neutral ground, held on a separate attack by two lone spectators on the Rapid goalkeeper, Herbert Feurer, and their goalscorer and match-winner, Peter Pasut.

The seven-man UEFA committees did not begin their investigations until mid-afternoon and a spokesman said: "No announcement will be made until Friday afternoon. The Scottish FA will have to be informed of the decision as

well as Celtic. After that it will be made public."

Meanwhile, English clubs have been busy themselves in the transfer market. Sunderland have paid almost £100,000 for the former Scottish international Ian Wallace, who has spent the past few months with the French club Brest.

Wallace, who cost Nottingham Forest £125 million when they bought him from Coventry, soon became disenchanted with life in France and at group of local businessmen, whom it is believed, are being advised by Andy McCutcheon, the former Southend manager, to sign the former Everton midfielder player Andy King who has been playing in the Dutch Second Division.

UNWELL RECENTLY, being neither a Proddy nor a Tim, I had never fully understood why I preferred Celtic to Rangers.

We did not closely examine the relationship between the big Glasgow clubs while growing up in Dundee. Why had Rangers more supporters than Celtic? It was easier to say "the Pope" than "F... the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland."

Later we appreciated that there were degrees of sectarianism and that, while Celtic had Protestant as well as Catholic players, Rangers would have nothing to do with Catholics. That could not be right.

Nor was such rigidity confined to the boardroom. Celtic's fans tended to have more flexibility, fair and exuberance, and it made us proud to be Scottish when they won the European Cup in 1967. When Scotland triumphed again, we were unimpressed. Rangers winning the Cup-Winners Cup, their supporters fought with the Barcelona police. We were not so proud then.

But these examples are examples of the clubs' character, not of the character of the fans. I could not guarantee some action. But both clubs have warned that snowfalls pose a threat, mainly through making the tarring and open seating unsafe.

Cheshire hopes that, having thrown out the Stamford Bridge pitch with industrial heaters, they can hold off the frost with straw so that they can play some football.

Borke has also criticised the selection committee — which players are not allowed to do. That alone puts him in line for a fine.

West Indies extended their winning run in the World Series Cup one-day competition to six matches with a comfortable 65-run victory over Sri Lanka in Sydney. Replying to West Indies 267 for three from 50 overs — the highest score of the series — the Sri Lankans scored 205 for five, largely due to Roy Dias, who became the first Sri Lankan to pass 1,000 runs in limited over matches by scoring 65 not out off 99 balls. Two wickets went to Michael Holding, giving him 104 one-day wickets and besting Dennis Lillee's previous record of 103.

The ECB cannot now sit back and do nothing about Border's statement, which in any event broke a confidence. He has also openly criticised the Board. Border also said that the team would share the fine which has to be paid by this afternoon.

Certain members of the side are known to be unhappy about this, and one who does not want to be named said that he will not contribute a single cent. Border also said he wanted the £300 to be paid to the Ethiopian Relief Fund rather than to the ECB, a non-profit-making body.

Fred Bennett, the ABC chairman, finds himself in a difficult position. He was never a great support of Hughes as captain and will

Henry Blotfeld in Sydney

Border fans the Lawson flames

'Allan Border, Australia's new captain, has again openly flouted the Australian Cricket Board's authority over team-manager Bob Merriman's decision to impose a \$500 fine on Geoff Lawson, after the fast bowler's behaviour in the fourth Test at Melbourne. After having an lbw appeal against Gordon Greenidge turned down, Lawson petulantly refused to take his hat or enter the field from the end of the over. Border was forced to run down to fine leg with them.

The umpires did not make an official complaint against Lawson — Randall, the umpire concerned, was standing in his first Test, but Merriman, who had empowered to do so, fined Lawson \$500, of which \$15,000 was suspended for 15 months, effectively putting Lawson under a good behaviour bond.

The board met in Hobart last week to hear the player's complaint, and Merriman and Border were both present. Border made his case and the result was that the period of the bond was reduced from 15 to three months, but the fine stayed. It was agreed, too, that this would be done in respect of on-field behaviour during the fourth Test match, or any match, it could only justly follow from a report from the umpires in control of the match.

Two days ago, after Australia had lost by five wickets to the West Indies at the Sydney Cricket Ground, Border read a prepared statement to the press. He said that the Australian cricket team has rejected the fine imposed on Geoff Lawson. The team considers that if action was to be taken against any player in respect of on-field behaviour during the fourth Test match, or any match, it could only justly follow from a report from the umpires in control of the match.

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SKIING

Haight out for season

World Cup downhill practice was abandoned in Megève, France, yesterday shortly after Canada's Diana Haight suffered a bad fall, rupturing ligaments in her right knee.

She returns home today for surgery and is expected to miss the rest of the season.

Only 24 of the scheduled 62 competitors tackled the course made dangerous by a lack of snow.

The Olympic champion, Michaela Fignini of Switzerland, confirmed her current form with the fastest time of 1 min 33.54 sec.

The Austrian Federation has rejected the resignation of Peter Prodinger, a spokesman said in Innsbruck. He said Prodinger had sent his resignation in writing to the president, Arnold Koller, last week

RESULTS

FOOTBALL CONSIDERATION — OPR 0.

KING'S CUP (Herts) Dec 28: GB beat Ireland 2-1. Bate beat St. Helens 2-1. Bate beat St. Helens 2-1. Bate beat St. Helens 2-1.

NATIONAL LEAGUE (Herts) Dec 28: GB beat Ireland 2-1. Bate beat St. Helens 2-1. Bate beat St. Helens 2-1. Bate beat St. Helens 2-1.

ALPINE WORLD CUP DOWNHILL (Switzerland) Dec 28: Michaela Fignini (SUI) 1:33.54. Fignini (SUI) 1:33.54. Fignini (SUI) 1:33.54. Fignini (SUI) 1:33.54.

BOBISLEIGH (Germany) Dec 28: East Germany beat West Germany 2-1. East Germany beat West Germany 2-1. East Germany beat West Germany 2-1. East Germany beat West Germany 2-1.

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SPORT IN BRIEF

MOTOR CYCLING: Honda will be sponsored in grand prix racing for the first time next season, by Rothmans. The bikes in their new blue and white livery will be ridden by Freddie Spencer and Takazumi Katayama.

BADMINTON: Gillian Gowers lost in three hard games 11-4, 5-11, 7-11 to the 1983 finalist Sherry Liu of Taiwan in the first round of the Taipei Masters in the Pro-Kennex World GP in Taiwan yesterday, but Helen Troke kept English hopes alive with an 11-5, 11-6 win over another local player, Chen Hsin, writes Richard Jago.

GOLF: Neil Coles, the former Ryder Cup player, is vacating the chairmanship of the European PGA Tournament Committee to head a new board of directors responsible for four

WELSH OPEN TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS (Cardiff) Dec 28: Wales beat Scotland 3-0. Wales beat Scotland 3-0. Wales beat Scotland 3-0. Wales beat Scotland 3-0.

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Wigan's Gaynor Stanley will swim also in the 200 metres breaststroke here. In a recent meeting in the United States she sadly allowed two Americans to overhaul her in the final few metres and she must improve her finish if she is to maintain her progress.

6 18 Farming
6 25 A Prayer
6 30 Today in

- 16 **Parping Today.**
- 25 **A Prayer for the Day.**
- 25 **Today including 7, 4, & 9 News.**
- 35 **Yesterday in Parliament.**
- 40 **News: Desert Island Discs: Playwright: Tom Stoppard.**
- 45 **The Arts: International Assignment.**
- 50 **News: International News.**
- 55 **Morning Story: The Drop-Outs.**
- 60 **Daily Service.**
- 65 **News: Balloon Tyres: Career of the Scotsman who flew the first balloon over Britain.**
- 70 **Natural Selection: Raindrops Keep Falling on My Antennae. How do insects cope with wet weather?**
- 75 **News: You and Yours.**
- 80 **A Lexicon of Laughter: If for humour.**
- 85 **The World at One: News.**

- News: Woman's Hour from Manchester.
- News: Masters' India Book Four.
- News: Going Places: Travel and

40 Story Time: Master of the Moor
 0 PM. News Magazine.
 0 The Six O'Clock News.
 39 The Wow Show presents... For

6 News: The Archers.
20 Pick of the Week.
20 Nowt But Scenery. Profile of the

45 Any Questions. With Germaine Greer, Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley, Prof. Brian Griffiths, Richard

39 Letter from America by Alistair Cooke.
45 Kaleidoscope: On the Moscow Prince

15 A Book at Bedtime: Empire of the
Sun by J. G. Ballard (15)
30 The World Tonight
0 Today in Parliament
15 The Financial World Tonight

20 Week Ending
2. 0 News; weather; shipping.
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 ...me, 1 40 Options, 2 3 Telling the
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Weekly Report. 7 40 The John Kerr
Interview. 8 2 Gerry Ford's Country
Premier. 10 0 News: Friday Late
50 Rock on Scotland. 12 30 am - day
Radio 4.

World Service

631a) at the following times: GMT
 0 am Newdesk 7 0 News 7 9 Twenty-
 our Hours 7 30 Juke Box Daz 7 45
 Merchant Navy Programme 8 0 News
 9 Reflections 8 15 The Classical
 ular 8 30 Foreign Correspondents 8 35
 8 40 9 00 News 9 15 The

World Today. 9:30 Financial News. 9:40
Look Ahead. 9:45 Monitor. 10:0 News.
Book Porter and His Music. 10:15
Merchant Navy Programme. 10:30 Just
Business Matters. 11:0 News. 11:3 News
about Britain. 11:15 In the Meantime.

The Asking. 12 45 Sports Roundup
 News. 1 9 Twenty-Four Hours. 1 45
 The Feel. 2 9 Outlook. 2 45 Learning
 Radio Newswheel. 3 15 In the
 Psychiatrist's Chair. 4 0 News
 Commentary. 4 15 Science in Action

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Britain	3	15	The World Today	4	50	
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1923)
NFT3: 8.45 VAUDEVILLE (FA) (Ger

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